

"Everyone Loves Marineland!"(?)
Entertainment Animal Advocacy, Praxis, and Resisting Corporate Repression

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*When we return wild animals to nature,
we merely return them to what is already theirs.
For man cannot give wild animals freedom,
they can only take it away.*

Jacques-Yves Cousteau

For Kiska

Abstract

Following allegations and graphic evidence of animal cruelty and neglect documented by ex-employee whistleblowers of Marineland Canada to the *Toronto Star* newspaper in late 2012, the ethics surrounding animal captivity have been increasingly contested in regional public discourse. Animal advocates in the Niagara region and beyond have been compelled to demand change at the infamous local captive animal park— whether it be welfare-oriented reform, or radical animal liberation. With this as a backdrop, this research explores the ideologies, experiences, and strategic tactics of anti-Marineland animal advocates; the sociopolitical issues surrounding the largely unexamined but serious issue of imprisoned animals as entertainers; and the ensuing governmental and corporatist attempts to squash dissent of anti-Marineland critics. Situated within a Critical Animal Studies theoretical paradigm as well as a flourishing global anti-captivity critique inspired by the film *Blackfish*, this project employs semi-structured interviews and participant observation methodologies to analyze advocates' views on captivity under capitalism and the effectiveness of their praxes. Finally, this research illuminates the nuances of the conventionally-upheld dualistic theoretical debate of animal welfare versus animal rights within zoo and aquaria entertainment contexts through an exploratory examination of advocates' complex ideological views.

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Animal Trainer Comes Forward

"I saw skin floating in the water. The skin was floating. It would fall off the dolphins and float away" (Demers as cited in Diebel, 2013). Amidst minimal consideration for the interests of captive animals¹ in our speciesist and arguably apathetic society, this allegation² of animal abuse and neglect disseminated by former Marineland animal trainer Phil Demers in a *Toronto Star* online video release quickly caught the attention of Ontarians and shook the terrain of the local Niagara region community. After a twelve-year tenure as senior animal trainer at Marineland Canada—³ the now infamous aquarium and theme-based "amusement" park located in Niagara Falls, Ontario— Demers left his job as a result of a growing discomfort with the state of the animals' living conditions, and the realization that in his position he could not adequately address the animals' care needs (Demers as cited in Diebel, 2013). While Marineland consistently has been critiqued by animal advocates for decades (dating back most notably to the first public demonstration held by Greenpeace activists in 1977⁴), and has remained controversial for a myriad of reasons and among a diverse set of critics (to be discussed below), this latest controversy was significant. Scathing allegations of animal abuse, mistreatment, and neglect by Demers along with fourteen other former Marineland staffers to the *Toronto Star* newspaper 'Investigative Series' beginning in August 2012 arguably constitute the most damaging development to the park's reputation, and mark the inception of an internationally-recognized

¹ For the sake of ease, when I make reference to *animals* I am referring to non-human animals since from a technical standpoint, humans are also animals.

² This allegation was the first of many brought forward by former Marineland employee and marine animal trainer Phil Demers.

³ Marineland Canada is a privately owned facility located in Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada. I initially note Marineland Canada to distinguish from Marineland located in Antibes, France. For simplicity's sake, I subsequently refer to Marineland Canada simply as Marineland.

⁴ See: Marineland in Depth. (2014, August 2). *Marineland Summer Trivia Challenge*. Retrieved from <http://www.marinelandindepth.com/2014/08/marineland-summer-trivia.html>.

resistance movement against Marineland. Recognizing this contemporary controversy as a critical moment in the park's reputation, this research project is intent on further exploration of this case which is both timely and necessary.

1.2 Research Premise and General Objectives

This thesis is centrally focussed on the examination of the looming controversy galvanized by a brave set of Marineland whistleblowers as well as the ideologies, experiences, goals, and tactics of the resultant anti-Marineland resistance movement. As a means to illuminate the numerous significant sociopolitical issues associated with the capture, breeding, and use of wild animals for human amusement, this project investigates the viewpoints, struggles, and courses of action developed by a diverse group of anti-Marineland advocates who are fighting for either reformist or revolutionary change. Through participant observation of anti-Marineland demonstrations and a comparative analysis of semi-structured qualitative interviews done with both anti-captivity activists and animal welfare proponents, this research explores how Marineland critics are ideologically situated (i.e. advocating traditional "humane" welfare, incremental animal rights, abolitionist animal rights, or animal liberation⁵), how their experiences have shaped their views, the potential implications of their praxes, and the feasibility of ideologically-disparate animal advocates working together towards meaningful solutions amidst constant struggles challenging socially pervasive speciesism⁶. Further, through analyzing Marineland animal advocates' complex perspectives, this thesis interrogates the rationality of the

⁵ This list of animal advocacy ideologies is not exhaustive and I recognize that other ideological perspectives may exist .

⁶ Dunayer (2004) defines speciesism as "a failure, in attitude or practice, to accord any nonhuman being equal consideration and respect" (p. 5). It is upheld through sentiments of anthropocentrism which dominate our society as seen in the ubiquity of animal exploitation endemic to capitalist structures and industries.

traditionally-upheld dualistic discourse of animal welfare versus animal rights in Critical Animal Studies.

By unpacking and critically analyzing various doctrines of animal protection that permeate our society (i.e. traditional animal welfare, incremental animal rights, abolitionist animal rights, and animal liberation) as well as statist attempts to silence dissent across various progressive social movements (as seen with Marineland, in animal advocacy in general, as well as other anthropocentric social movements) this thesis seeks to interrogate and comment on a variety of issues in animal entertainment. That is, I hope to expose the complex phenomenon of animal captivity, as well as challenge uncritical and essentialist notions of binary categories of animal advocacy. Through this critical assessment, I make an unapologetic case for the liberation of captives⁷ in the entertainment sphere and across all animal industries as part of liberation from the oppressive system of capitalist tyranny of which animal enslavement is a central component, and encourage self-reflection amongst readers to transcend a speciesist status-quo towards a more progressive end for animals.

1.3 Arriving at this Topic

While there is a strong rationale to be made for investigating the phenomenon of animal captivity within critical social justice pedagogy one might ask, in the words of Berger (1980, p. 1), "why look at animals?" For me, my interest in Marineland, and in studying animals more generally, stem from an array of sources. Growing up in a vegetarian household, I internalized a certain outlook on animals that deviated substantially from the societal norm where animal use is pervasive, unquestioned, accepted, and promoted. The consideration of animals' interests in not

⁷ When I refer to captives, I am referring to non-human animals who are forcibly confined and enslaved without consent in an unnatural setting.

suffering and dying for my food was a deeply-engrained perspective that I held with strong conviction with little question as to why this was so important— it simply felt *natural* and right. Although I was raised knowing that the consumption of meat and other animal products was problematic for moral and health reasons (see: Campbell & Campbell, 2006; Fox, 1999; Masson, 2009; Robbins, 1987), I was very much naïve about how speciesism manifests in our culture in other more subtle ways. While I had good intentions and thought of myself as a radical proponent for animal rights amongst carnists⁸, I was an unquestioning patron of zoos and aquariums for most of my life, including frequent visits to my local amusement park: Marineland. Without at this point going into a detailed discussion of the ethical quandaries inherently associated with institutions (such as Marineland) that profit from animal imprisonment (discussed in following chapters), suffice to say here that I possessed what Gary Francione (2000, p. 1) calls a "moral schizophrenia"⁹, which are contradictory assessments of the worth of animals whereby we claim to take their interests seriously, but because of their property status, moral value is ascribed to some and not others.

Moral contradictions are not always entirely discernible though and can operate in complex and illusive ways. For instance, even though the notion of moral contradictions is often used to demonstrate people's confused perspectives on the supposed value of some animals over others (for instance, regarding companion animals such as cats and dogs with reverence while blatantly disregarding "othered" farm animals such as cows and chickens) (Bisgould, 2008; Francione, 2000), it is also seen in the actions of self-professed "animal lovers". Visitors to zoos and aquariums are very likely enamoured with the exotic creatures on display and through

⁸ Developed by psychologist Melanie Joy (2010), the term carnism refers to an ideologically-conditioning mechanism that legitimizes the consumption of some animals over others.

⁹ It is important to note that "moral schizophrenia" employs very ableist language which is problematic in anti-oppressive research. I will instead use 'moral contradictions' to convey this idea.

patronizing these institutions, they are presented with a rare opportunity to see and interact with them. However, the act of purchasing tickets to zoos and aquariums to satisfy an urge to come face-to-face with the animals they hold in such high esteem ironically illuminates a deeply-engrained, yet perhaps unrecognized, attitude of human supremacy. In essence, patronizing these institutions tacitly legitimizes the subjugation of *these* animals, and places a value on them as commodities to serve *our* wants of having some kind of superficial encounter with them that we imagine is one of reciprocal love and admiration.

This more subtle type of moral contradiction that deems animals as entertainment *objects* a non-issue is ubiquitous in our culture. Because of this, the ability (and even willingness) to look beyond these socially-established norms towards a more progressive outlook of morally-consistent attitudes and behaviours that include love and respect for all animals is difficult; a transformation to ways of thinking that see merit in disrupting the status-quo must be developed. For me, even though I held a strong disposition for the ethical case of vegetarianism most of my life, I consistently displayed moral contradictions in relation to entertainment animals until I entered university. In what I now regard as a pivotal decision in fostering the person I have become today, I decided to take an elective course in Sociology called 'Animals and Human Societies'— an introductory course on animal ethics and intersectional¹⁰ politics. That course was instrumental in helping me expand my lens of social and political consciousness and in starting to challenge the spurious rationalizations of the multifaceted ways animals are routinely exploited in our society. Soon after I concentrated my studies in Sociology within a Critical Animal Studies stream, I slowly started to generate a strong disdain for something that I

¹⁰ Intersectionality refers to a recognition of overlapping oppressions. In the case of animals, intersectionality is a commitment to see how speciesism can be seen to work in tandem with gendered, heterosexist, racist, imperialist, and possible other oppressive discourses and practices, and promotes radical solutions to dismantle structural inequality from all angles.

previously held moral contradictions about: the breeding and use of animals as entertainers for humans.

While critical discussions about animals in the classroom and in books were certainly fascinating, it did not seem worthwhile to only raise these topics in a university setting; these discussions should take place outside of the ivory tower to try and enact meaningful change to the atrocities being committed within our contemporary and "normal" functioning society. I decided to become active and sought out local community organizers concerned for the welfare and rights of animals. In 2009 I attended my first demonstration which happened to be one targeted against Marineland coordinated by the local animal advocacy organization Niagara Action for Animals (NAfA). Through my interactions with other animal activists and participation in anti-Marineland protests since then, I realized how problematic Marineland was from an intersectional social justice perspective (in regards to severe animal welfare issues in addition to captivity itself, inadequate labour standards for employees, corporatist ties to supposedly "neutral" and "fair" governmental institutions, and blatant disregard for the economically marginalized residents of a trailer park under the park owner's supervision). I was even more perplexed about how the majority of the population did not seem to know or care about the myriad of issues arising from this park. Coming to these realizations only deepened my principled opposition in fighting against animal captivity at Marineland and beyond, and I strongly believe that becoming an activist was as valuable a learning experience on animal rights, hegemonic societal attitudes, and statist repression of social movements as was my formal education.

Having taken on a passionate stance against animal captivity and being active in the fight against it, I thought about how I could integrate the knowledge I have accrued from my life

experiences to broaden the scope of Critical Animal Studies in the academy. While Animal Studies has been an area of scholarship in interdisciplinary studies for quite some time, the field of *Critical Animal Studies* (which advances a critical and intersectional radical approach to liberating animals as part of a comprehensive and progressive social justice agenda) is a burgeoning field of inquiry in academia (Institute for Critical Animal Studies, 2014).

Nevertheless, in reviewing the existing literature contained within Critical Animal Studies discourses, I found that contributions that speak to the various issues pertaining to animal captivity in entertainment institutions intent on profit maximization are relatively sparse in comparison to the more abundant scholarship on veganism¹¹ and animal rights more broadly. This is certainly not surprising given that public discussions on veganism have become more widespread as more people are beginning to understand the moral issues that surround animals raised and slaughtered for food through factory farming and agribusiness (see: Francione, 2008; Patterson, 2002; Singer, 1975; Sorenson, 2010; Torres, 2007) as well as the negative consequences that the production and consumption of animal products has on one's body (see: Campbell & Campbell, 2006; Robbins, 1987), the sustainability of our planet (see: Masson, 2009; Safran Foer, 2009; Sorenson, 2010; World-Watch 2004), and marginalized humans as an intersectional social justice issue (see: Adams, 1990; Fox, 1999; Nibert, 2002; Sorenson, 2010). I certainly value the contributions made in these works, especially since in terms of sheer number "food" animals make up the vast majority of animals exploited and killed globally (exceeding 65 billion annually, not including aquatic animals) (FARM, 2011). However, as I pursued graduate studies, it was my intention to broaden the knowledge sphere concerning the plight of

¹¹ Veganism in the strict sense refers to a philosophy that critiques the notion of animal commodification and that rejects the use of animals across all sectors. In my use of the term above though, I acknowledge that mainstream society typifies veganism as a *dietary* choice and thus refer to veganism as a philosophy around food politics, in particular around the consequences around animal agriculture and the consumption of meat and other animal products.

"entertainment' animals" since, as Malamud observes: "zoos have generated little scholarship outside of their own zoological and institutional community" (1998, p. 5). I also believe that this area of investigation is particularly important now as consciousness about captivity issues is beginning to shift, even in mainstream dialogues.

When I decided to pursue my M.A. and research animals in entertainment, I had to narrow in on a particular sector and negotiate between competing desires for potential research topics: circuses, rodeos, and zoos were all areas of animal exploitation that piqued my interest for further analysis. However, in 2012 some pivotal events occurred at Marineland (detailed in depth in chapter two) that generated greater awareness about an issue that was largely ignored by the general public. The controversy surrounding Marineland has steadily escalated since, and in conjunction with a growing anti-captivity awareness propelled by influential events like the annual Taiji, Japan dolphin capture and slaughter documented in the Oscar-winning documentary *The Cove*, as well as a scathing critique of institutions like SeaWorld in the widely-acclaimed film *Blackfish*, a sociological analysis of Marineland is not only necessary, but timely, and a relevant illustration of current social struggles around animals.

In deciding on this general topic, I decided to narrow the focus to reflect some of my other interests while also attempting to more thoroughly inform the literature. Rich analysis on zoos and aquariums can be seen in the works of scholars including Acampora (2010), Best (NDb), Jamieson (2006), Malamud (1998) and White (2000), but that which merges an analysis of the problems with zoos and aquariums with *activist* responses is lacking. Further, an examination of the broad theoretical debate within animal advocacy of the merit and rationalization of pursuing an either animal 'welfare' or an animal 'rights' and/or 'liberation' agenda, and the tactics for achieving these goals has been largely espoused by scholars who

theorize in largely abstract manners without much input from on-the-ground activists (e.g. Francione & Garner, 2010). In cases where activists' perspectives on this broad debate are disseminated and discussed (e.g. Ball, ND; Friedrich, 2011; Phelps, 2011), the discussion is usually centered, once again, around "food" animals and veganism. Coming to this thesis topic was thus premised on a desire to merge my various research interests that intersect with and illuminate the (human) voices of those embedded in the Marineland struggle in order to contribute significant insight into a host of issues in animal advocacy. The problematic nature of animal entertainment, activist responses to it through praxis, and their experiences with repressive state apparatuses that seek to weaken their efforts are all enveloped in the Marineland case. With my personal experiences in the progression of this struggle and my critical outlooks, the arguments contained in this thesis offer meaningful contributions that broaden the terrain of Critical Animal Studies and social justice pedagogy.

Chapter Two: Case Study Rationale: Why Look at Marineland?

This chapter provides a trajectory of noteworthy events in the park's history that position Marineland as a relevant case for further exploration given the goals of this research project. Here, I detail a history of activism at the park, from the mid 1990s up until and including the 2012 controversy prompted by the *Toronto Star* 'Investigative Series' as a means to contextualize the contemporary struggles surrounding the park today.

2.1 A Brief History

In proposing a case for an in-depth examination of Marineland, it is worth noting how this seemingly cheerful establishment of family entertainment that promises visitors a "whale of a time" (Holer, ND) is actually ripe with opportunities for critical interrogation. Marineland has a rich and detailed history of struggle, resistance, and controversy that extends well beyond what can conceivably be discussed in this thesis at length. However, there are some particularly notable key events in its history that will be discussed here in order to illuminate how this controversial institution became a contemporary flashpoint for local, national, and even international social and political strife as a result of current whistleblower allegations.

Opening in 1961, Marineland graduated from modest beginnings of roadside animal displays to an enormously successful and internationally-recognized amusement park ("Happiness is not Marineland", 2013). In contrast to other marine theme parks built on a complex corporate model with various stakeholders and accountability processes, Marineland is a privately-owned institution operating under the control of its sole owner: John Holer. Because of its private status, in concert with lax animal protection legislation that views animals as mere property rather than sentient subjects (Francione, 2008), Holer has and continues to conduct his business in accordance with his own set of personally-developed rules, facing minimal scrutiny

from governmental bodies. However, his moral codes are arguably not up to par with that of even modest animal protectionists, a discrepancy that has secured his reputation as a controversial figure in the Niagara region. Furthermore, community members who prioritize and actively fight for the promotion of animal welfare and/or rights censure Holer by protesting against Marineland (which has been occurring for several decades); meanwhile, Holer's attempts to curb dissent took various forms.

2.2 Marineland vs. NAfA

On several occasions, Holer has resorted to physical altercations with activists. In 1996 he was alleged to have deliberately engaged in a hit-and-run of a female protestor at an anti-captivity Gadfly¹² conference and demonstration but was not charged by the Niagara Regional Police (Animal Liberation Collective, ND). More recently, in 2012 and 2013 respectively, he was documented on film uttering death threats to two vocal anti-captivity activists, also escaping legal charges ("John Holer: The Man Behind Marineland", 2013). Holer's micro-level strategy of using interpersonal scare tactics to get rid of individuals he considers particularly "harmful" to the smooth functioning of the Marineland empire are weak though since the resistance movement against Marineland is continually growing. Squelching opposition would have to take a more radical and comprehensive form: i.e through legal intimidation.

In 2003, Marineland issued its first lawsuit against local animal advocacy group NAfA. The suit cited punitive damages in the amount of \$250 000 and charged NAfA with libel when they sent a letter to Autoland Chrysler dealership asking them to reconsider holding their holiday party at Marineland (Sorenson, 2008). Since NAfA's claims about the poor state of animals held captive in institutions like Marineland have been substantiated by reports from marine mammal

¹² Gadfly is a caucus of concerned animal activists and marine mammal experts from all over the world working towards a common goal of ending marine mammal captivity (Animal Liberation Collective, ND).

experts (Draper, 2004), Marineland's rationale for initiating such a deleterious lawsuit on a small grassroots movement raises questions. Activists maintained that rather than it being a serious attempt to correct any misinformed criticism, Marineland's recourse to legal action was an attempt to intimidate its critics (Draper, 2004). Indeed Marineland did not follow through with the charges by going through the lengthy and costly process of taking NAfA to court; Marineland's actions instead represent what Pring & Canan (1996) refer to as a 'SLAPP' (Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation)—a shrewd attempt to chill public opposition to a corporation through potentially damaging personal and legal consequences (such as threat of bankruptcy and possible jail sentences). This was Marineland's first attempt at a SLAPP designed to bury its "offenders" in legal paperwork and fees, and it seemed to be working (Draper, 2004). As a small grassroots animal advocacy group that runs solely on the financial support of generous members and donors, NAfA could not fight mounting legal fees without substantial external financial support.

Fortunately in 2005, famed Canadian environmentalist David Suzuki came to speak to Niagara region residents as part of a fundraising drive for NAfA's legal defense and to speak on Marineland's bullying tactics (referring to Marineland as a "thug in the community") (Draper, 2005). Suzuki's talk elevated the public consciousness on the nefarious actions of Marineland and the negative implications actions like SLAPPs have on protected free speech amendments; as a result of the sweeping coverage it got (possibly in conjunction other factors) Marineland dropped its lawsuit against NAfA in 2006 (Langley, 2006).

2.3 Coalition Building: Fighting Human and Non-Human Animal Oppression

While the SLAPP suit came and went, the ripple effects accompanying it were very much real. Marineland's efforts to keep its critics at bay did have an effect as protests and public

opposition came to a halt for a few years. In time though, a new group of concerned citizens along with some of the original NAFa activists started to return to the site to engage in peaceful assembly and protest. In 2011, some community activists wanting to elevate opposition to animal abuse and captivity at Marineland specifically through a sustained pressure campaign¹³ formed a new grassroots group: Marineland Animal Defense (M.A.D) (Powell, 2013). According to M.A.D's website, the goals of the group are to: "end breeding programs at Marineland, end plans for expansion of animal captivity, remove captive animals to Sanctuary sites, and hold Marineland and park owner John Holer accountable for various abuses, human and non-human" ("About Marineland Animal Defense MAD", ND). In conjunction with the whistleblower accounts released in the *Toronto Star* newspaper, the movement gained traction through successful campaigning strategies, outreach, and coalition-building with other local social justice movements as well as other community members (not necessarily concerned about the plight of Marineland animals) that have experienced negative repercussions as a result of Holer's actions (Powell, 2013).

While Marineland has been a site of consistent criticism and condemnation by community activists for decades¹⁴ because animals in this park face *less-than-normal* standards of care expected from zoos and marine parks due to neglect and cruelty, complaints extend beyond mistreatment of animals; Holer has been blamed for the perpetuation of human-related oppressions as well. In addition to providing precarious employment premised on subpar labour standards and relying on cheap and marginalized workers to fill low-income, unstable, and potentially dangerous job positions, in 2009 Holer suddenly and without warning evicted forty-

¹³ Pressure campaigns entail focusing on a particular site for protest, engaging in more direct forms of action and strategies, as a way to work towards more tangible results than holding a more general, symbolic protest could possibly achieve (Powell, 2013).

¹⁴ Not including the time immediately following the wake of the NAFa SLAPP suit, subsequently chilling activists in their efforts to demonstrate against the park.

seven families from the Green Oaks Trailer Park which fell on part of his one thousand acre Marineland property ("John Holer: The Man Behind Marineland", 2013; "Welcome to Green Oaks", ND). These Green Oaks residents claimed to face continual harassment from Holer in the lead-up to the eviction and then instantaneously lost property equity and became homeless as a result of his decision to repossess surplus land; most of Marineland's one thousand acre property remains undeveloped, and his supposed plans for expansion at the park never transpired ("John Holer: The Man Behind Marineland", 2013). Unfortunately also, this eviction resulted in one of the Green Oaks residents (who had a lack of finances and nowhere else to go) committing suicide. A suicide note left behind on the walls of her home read: "A blessing on John Holer. May you get exactly what you deserve—10 fold" (Johnston, 2013).

2.4 Not on My Property!: Land Leases and Activist Obstacles

With the support of former Green Oaks residents, union and labour activists in the region, as well as animal welfare and rights activists, attendance at M.A.D-coordinated demonstrations steadily grew in numbers and Marineland was once again taking notice. In addition to holding protest signs on the shoulder of Marineland Parkway where hundreds of cars drive by every day, activists leafleted anti-captivity literature to incoming visitors of the park as they approached the vehicle entrance. Certainly there is a highly disproportionate success rate in the shaping of public perceptions between a corporate empire and grassroots activists, and should be recognized in terms of understanding activists' relative success. While Marineland has the financial means and corporate pull to inundate the public with propaganda (e.g. their radio and television advertisements, and billboards), activists must rely on more elementary ways of disseminating their message (e.g. leafleting individuals, holding signs outside of the park). Yet, Marineland seemed to be perturbed enough by these comparatively humble tactics at influencing public

opinion (by leafleting that allowed activists to come face-to-face with park visitors and provided them with an opportunity to engage in a critical dialogue about animal captivity) that Holer resorted to take action to silence them. In June 2012, John Holer petitioned the City of Niagara Falls to lease him the strip of municipal property by Marineland's vehicle entrance as part of a park "beautification" initiative ("John Holer: The Man Behind Marineland", 2013). While Marineland claimed this would be in the best interests of the protestors to protect their "safety", in addition to claiming this land to be a city "surplus"—thus implying the public has no use for it—activists saw this proposal as Holer's attempt to weaken the capacity for protestors to relay their message, and make a once-legal act of peaceful leafleting effectively illegal by having the ability to slap offenders with trespassing charges ("The 2013 Marineland Exit Leaflet Strategy", 2013).

In a frustrated response to Marineland's attempts to stifle activists' educational outreach capacity on site through the aid of a cooperative Niagara Falls City Council, a group of M.A.D activists decided to change location of their protest: they engaged in their first home demonstration at the residence of John Holer. While this tactic was met with various responses by the general community and activists alike (as shown later in findings from my interviews), it nonetheless illustrates the consequences of a corporation's attempt to extinguish democratic freedoms in an effort to *save face* and continue their exploitative practices.

2.5 The Toronto Star Exposé

Clearly Marineland has a strong history of repression even against what can be considered a still burgeoning and relatively modest anti-Marineland insurgency. In late 2012 though, the Marineland controversy grew exponentially, with continuing effects. On August 15th, 2012, Phil Demers—head animal trainer at Marineland—announced scathing allegations of

severe animal abuse, mistreatment, and neglect as part of an in-depth exposé on the operations of Marineland covered by the *Toronto Star* newspaper. As the Marineland chronicles continued with investigative journalism by Linda Diebel and Liam Casey, and with the emergence of fourteen other ex-staff whistleblowers offering eyewitness accounts and photographic and/or video evidence of animal abuse, Marineland has become the subject of intense public scrutiny and has garnered massive waves of negative attention on local, national, and international fronts. Poor water quality that led to extensive skin damage and blindness among sea lions and dolphins, cramped and barren enclosures where a baby beluga whale was killed by some more aggressive older male beluga whales, and an employee being forced to "dispatch" a sick and ailing deer with a dull blade and no anesthetic were only *some* of the shocking claims made by ex-employees documenting a pattern of animal distress and torture that constituted business-as-usual at Marineland (Diebel, 2013). Worth noting is the fact that in order for these whistleblowers to come forward they had to break sanctioned non-disclosure agreements they had made with Holer upon being hired as park employees (Diebel, 2012). While dedicated animal rights activists in the region have made the same allegations about Marineland animal cruelty for years, the extent to which their claims were taken seriously by the public remain questionable. Precisely because the recent allegations came from former employees and were disseminated through a reputable newspaper, suddenly the claims that had been made by dedicated animal activists for decades were given a new-found legitimacy. As a result of the dissemination of these testimonials to a mainstream news source, public awareness about the inner workings of the park has been exponentially heightened. *Smooshi* the walrus, *Skoot* the beluga whale, *Larry* the harbor seal, and *Kiska* the lone orca became household names, and this disturbing development became

tantamount to expanding and deepening a consciousness about issues around animal welfare and captivity in ways rarely considered before in this region.

2.6 Muzzling Dissent

It should come as no surprise that as a result of the irreparable damages to the park's reputation that resulted from this in-depth investigative reporting, Marineland as a profitable and successful institution would be left to sink or swim. Instead of taking responsibility and cutting its losses, Marineland continued its efforts to smash dissent— this time through stronger means than ever before.

Beginning early in 2013, Marineland issued six more SLAPP suits citing damages totaling \$14.25 million to some of its most prominent opponents. Three suits were laid against former employees, two suits against animal activists, and one against the *Toronto Star* newspaper. This legal tactic (premised on leveraging fear into quiet submission) was not Marineland's only recycled strategy to try and make its critics disappear. Since activists could no longer leaflet the vehicle entrance as a result of the public land lease, they had modified their public education strategy by leafleting at the park's vehicle exit instead. This actually turned out to be a more successful strategy since park-goers, now having already been in the park and seen for themselves the state of the animals, were more willing to talk to activists, listen to their case for anti-captivity, and possibly reconsider future trips to the park. Not happy with the subtle shift in strategy, Marineland tried to obtain a lease for this section of land too but were unable to do so because it was not under the jurisdiction of the City Council but rather the Niagara region (with the region refusing to cater to Holer's request). However, Marineland was able to acquire two more parcels of land near entrance gates where protestors regularly congregate by raising false allegations to Niagara Falls City Council on their supposed misconduct (Law, 2013). While

demonstrations hosted at Marineland have always been organized as peaceful and non-confrontational with patrons, Marineland lawyers told Niagara Falls City Council that some protestors allegedly resorted to bullying behaviours and harassment of patrons (including spitting) in an effort to rid them of space on site— it worked (Hutton, 2013).

In addition, as a way of limiting contact between activists and visitors since the land-lease strategy of the exit was denied, Holer began construction of a perimeter-length wire fence between Marineland property and municipal property as a physical barrier to activists. Also, with the aid of the Niagara Regional Police, Holer decided to redirect exiting vehicles of the park out the entrance. Since this is a busy intersection with no traffic lights installed, this was a dangerous "solution" to the persistent issue of avoiding "problem activists" and distributing information on Marineland. Eventually Holer paid the City of Niagara Falls to install traffic lights at the vehicle entrance so it could act as a permanent vehicle exit during Marineland's opening season ("Permanent Marineland Traffic Light Coming Next Year", 2013).

As a final point, most recently (as of this writing) Marineland hired a public relations company in an effort at image restoration. Through the slick PR skills of Marineland's newly-hired spokesperson John Beattie (who once worked under former Premier of Ontario Dalton McGuinty), Marineland pushed a propaganda campaign in an effort to discredit not only the claims of Marineland critics and activists, but of animal rights activists in general. In an ironically titled video and press release claiming "The Truth About Marineland", Beattie sought to dismiss legitimate criticisms against the park by characterizing them as lies made by fringe "radical animal liberation bullies"¹⁵ ("The Truth About Marineland", 2013). While the intent of the video and press release were to sway public opinion away from believing the claims by

¹⁵ While at the time of writing the Marineland press release originally stated "radical animal liberation *bullies*", this brought unwanted and negative attention to Marineland's PR campaign. As a result, Marineland now merely makes reference to "radical animal liberation *activists*".

animal advocates and Marineland critics, the video was not widely seen, and was largely deemed by Marineland critics to be a comical and pathetic attempt to impair the tenacious momentum of a massive anti-Marineland sentiment. Despite this, Beattie relentlessly continues to challenge Marineland critics on online message boards (such as *Sun Media* news articles) through weak and stereotyped assumptions on animal-rights and veganism, typically attracting condemnation than followers of his message.

This survey of Marineland's past and continuing controversies demonstrates that this local animal entertainment site has a deeply troubling history. Through unpacking the context of Marineland where the struggles between those advocates who fight for the interests of animals and the business that profits off their exploitation are at an impasse, a case for critical examination of this issue has been made. It is clear that Marineland has a vested interest in trying to muzzle the opinions of those who expose its multitudinous problems, and this has been shown in some of the actions previously discussed. However, now that I have described some of the problems at Marineland, it is important to consider what the animal advocates make of these developments, what they believe in terms of securing adequate animal protection, and how they plan on moving forward in this ever-present struggle. In the next chapter, I will outline my rationale for my research objectives and questions which prioritize the views and experiences of Marineland animal advocates post-*Toronto Star* investigation.

Chapter Three: Research Objectives and Questions

Having contextualized this topic with some integral background information, here I lay out the primary objectives and questions driving this research. Further, I provide an introductory examination of the welfare versus right and/or liberation animal advocacy paradigm here in order to debrief the reader on the more complex theoretical discussions surrounding this debate taken up in chapter four, as well as in the research findings later on.

3.1 Reconciling Differences in Animal Protection

Marineland is certainly imbued with a vast array of troublesome issues that potentially could be explored. While a focus on the struggles of animals in captivity (at Marineland and beyond) is integral to and a strong motivation for carrying out this kind of research, the aim of this research study is to highlight and analyze the perspectives and struggles of those who fight on their behalf: Marineland animal advocates. As animal advocates' voices are often sidelined in mainstream society as "extreme" or "radical" and thus perceived as illegitimate, the intent of this project is to amplify the voices of Marineland animal advocates who have informed and relevant critiques of this institution, while also placing their diverse opinions in conversation. Indeed, the anti-Marineland movement that has escalated since late 2012 encompasses various perspectives on how to *best* protect animals from the harm they experience in captive facilities. These ideologically-divergent perspectives on the (un)acceptability of captive animal industries and the strategies worth pursuing to save animals from their plight necessitate critique in order to reach informed solutions to this persistent problem. With this in mind, through this research I explore the various ideological orientations adopted by Marineland animal advocates for what they perceive to be the most sound moral arguments and practical actions for protecting animals' interests. It is important to address here that animal 'advocates' in this context constitute both

activists who engage in protest and other direct action initiatives to fight for animals *and* concerned citizens who possess a consciousness on animal suffering at Marineland, and may speak on their behalf, but are not active in the struggle. Through an examination of their perspectives (and experiences in the case of anti-Marineland activists in particular), I hope to more thoroughly understand their rationale and motivation for animal advocacy, what strategies and tactics they see as worth pursuing, and what barriers (if at all) they face in achieving their goals.

Related to this, in my research findings and my interpretation of them, I assess the potential for animal advocates— who embrace different philosophical outlooks— to forge alliances and effect change for the oppressed animals at Marineland. Coming to a more nuanced understanding of these various perspectives propels me as a researcher since I am an active member in this struggle, and have personally witnessed or been part of divisive debates, misunderstandings, and group-infighting as a result of different goals and tactics. A critical analysis of the ethos and practical utility of conflicting animal advocacy ideologies is essential as they call for different actions and outcomes which may impede progress in the anti-Marineland struggle and/or may unintentionally depress the well-being of Marineland animals. This thesis is then meant to be utilized as an activist 'tool' which can aid animal advocates at Marineland (and possibly beyond) in understanding various viewpoints in animal advocacy (i.e. listening to their critics), and engaging in a personal reflection on the implications of their praxes in order to become more effective animal advocates and build a stronger social movement.

3.2 Animal Advocacy: What Does It Look Like?

As stated, the anti-Marineland movement encompasses various opinions on how to best advance animal protection in a world dominated by apathy and speciesism. While certainly there

are complexities within the binary (which will be analyzed later on), for the sake of simplicity I have characterized two ideological paths which are constitutive of animal advocacy in general and are reflected in research participants' outlooks: *animal welfare reformism* (i.e. regulating the conditions of existing animal industries) and *animal rights abolitionism* and/or *animal liberation* (i.e. abolishing the status of animals as property). To clarify, while "welfare" and "rights" terms are often used interchangeably in everyday language, they each carry their own specific meanings and connotations.

The goal of animal rights is to grant animals moral and legal rights to live independently of humans' desire to use them as their property in exploitative ways (Francione, 2008; Regan, 1983; Rollin, 1981; Sorenson, 2010). Animal rights abolitionism is a radical theoretical approach that argues for ethical veganism as an integral baseline for realizing the possibility of animal rights; in other words, it advocates the total elimination of the *use* of animals to advance anthropocentric interests rather than engage in what it deems as futile attempts to pursue animal rights through reformist measures (Francione, 2010). Related, animal liberation usually employs abolitionist rhetoric and holds that human-centered hierarchies are unjust and that animals, as sentient subjects who possess intrinsic value, have the right to live independently from human societies (Best, NDa). Further, animal liberationists advance an anarchist philosophy that rejects statist solutions for protecting animals from exploitation as the state is inherently at odds with the advancement of animal freedom¹⁶. They typically also hold strong critiques of the role animal commodification plays in sustaining the oppressive capitalist system; as such, the liberation of

¹⁶ Anarchist perspectives on animal liberation which deem governmental state bodies and institutions as deleterious to animals can be seen in more detail in Brian. A Dominick's work discussing veganism and anarchism, or veganarchism, in *Animal liberation and social revolution: A vegan perspective on anarchism or an anarchist perspective on veganism*.

animals from human tyranny is part of a broad struggle in fighting against systemic oppression and for collective liberation (Best, NDa).

While there is significant overlap in the goals of animal rights and animal liberation, the philosophical underpinnings of animal liberation are indeed more radical and employ bold critiques of intersectional issues in capitalist society. However, since some animal rights advocates may not fully understand a clear distinction in terms and are prone to using rights and liberation language interchangeably, I am wary to demarcate these ideologies as necessarily distinct in the research findings discussions that follow in this project. Excluding a critical discussion on the theoretical differences in these terms outlined in the informing literatures section, going forward in my findings and analysis section I refer to discussions on animal rights as animal rights *and/or* liberation in recognition of the similarities and possible differences that the terms carry for my participants.

Additionally, animal welfare needs to be deconstructed as it also contains confused and at times contradictory assessments of what animal well-being looks like and how to achieve it. The ideology of welfare reform is a broad outlook with nuances connoting different end-goals depending on the person's philosophical leanings. Welfare reform encapsulates several stances, the most obvious one being a speciesist outlook that does not see any issues in the use or consumption of animals so long as it is done "humanely". It could also be assessed more pragmatically, such as the belief that welfare is the *best* outcome since rights and/or liberation is ultimately unrealistic, as well as an incrementalist (steps-based approach) outlook that advocates legislative welfare reform in the present with the idea of eventually achieving full rights abolitionism and/or liberation in the end (Dunayer, 2004; Francione, 2008; Sztybel, 2007).

Deconstructing the motivations and implications of these outlooks through an analysis of Marineland animal advocacy constitute the crux of this project; the research questions addressed in the next section highlight these and other inquiries.

3.3 Research Questions

Critically engaging with this theoretical debate on animal welfare versus rights and/or liberation has been a consistent interest of mine throughout the course of my involvement with Critical Animal Studies, and the intention here is to illuminate these philosophies through a look at grassroots animal activism concerning the use of animals in entertainment as well as the views of concerned citizens of the Niagara community. Having established the primary objectives of this study, I now turn to the four research questions that serve as the entry points for my inquiry and analysis.

1. Where are Marineland animal advocates ideologically situated in the animal welfare—liberation spectrum, and what factors have influenced their beliefs on animal captivity?

2. What kinds of actions and strategies stem from their ideological identities, and what are the theoretical and practical implications?

3. How do the different ideological orientations in animal advocacy create tensions *among* Marineland animal advocates and how do they go about handling them?

4. What are anti-Marineland activists' experiences with and/or perspectives on political persecution in this social movement, and has this broadened their perspectives on the nature of captive-animal industries?

I strongly believe that more thorough attempts at resolving ideological tensions in the case of Marineland is vital, while I also realize that the debate is complex and multi-layered. Indeed, while animal advocates are all motivated to do something about Marineland because they

empathize with animals, they may not all want the same things nor agree on the best approach to reach their desired end-goal. Furthermore because the pursuit of animal welfare and animal rights and/or liberation both in thought and action is still a niche concern for the broader society, it is concerning that the minority group who take action for animals face a conundrum concerning what to do and how. In the case of Marineland, we can see an actual illustration of these theoretical struggles play out. I am thus interested not only in engaging with different types of Marineland animal advocates in order to come to a better understanding of their outlooks and experiences in this regard, but also in taking what I learn from these individuals' perspectives so I and others can reach more informed conclusions about what approach is best for the animals.

Chapter Four: Informing Literatures and Critical Assessments

Before delving into the methodological construction of this project, I will discuss some relevant contributions in the literature pertaining to my research as well as offer some critical reflections. More specifically, I lay out three broad themes across various works that speak to the topics I intend to deconstruct and analyze: animals in entertainment, the spectrum of prominent theoretical ideologies in animal advocacy, and the responses and strategies employed in progressive social movements (for human and nonhuman causes). To begin, I discuss some important considerations regarding the captive animal entertainment sector, specifically zoos and aquariums.

4.1 Animals in Entertainment

"A zoo is a nightmare taking shape in concrete and steel, iron and glass, moats and electrified fences. It is a nightmare that, for its victims, has no end save death." – Derrick Jensen¹⁷

Moral Quandaries of Captivity

As a prelude to his comprehensive book *Reading Zoos: Representations of Animals in Captivity* Randy Malamud boldly states: "I don't like zoos; this book begins from that premise" (1998, p.1). Here I echo Malamud's sentiment and likewise begin this literature review on that premise. Given that they deliberately perpetuate common misunderstandings about their purpose and are fraught with numerous ethical issues, the zoo and aquaria industries ought to be met with immense public scrutiny and scorn yet, somehow, they face very minimal criticism. It is my intention to refute the dubious claims forwarded by zoo and aquaria stakeholders, clarify misunderstandings perpetuated by the status-quo and held by the general public, and illuminate the innate moral problems of captivity.

¹⁷ Jensen, D., & Tweedy-Holmes, K. (2007). *Though to Exist in the Wild: Awakening from the Nightmare of Zoos*. p. 1

In my experience, many people regularly view zoos and aquariums with an uncritical lens. They are seen as uncorrupted, even beneficial, institutions in contemporary society—innocent sites for family bonding, opportunities to interact with, learn about, and develop respect for wild animals, all the while zoo affiliates assume the benevolent role as wildlife ambassadors by regenerating species populations decimated in the wild through conservation initiatives. Rarely understood, however, are their intimate ties to corporate globalization which are ironically antithetical to the worthwhile goals the general public celebrates the zoo as promoting. Indeed, the zoo is not a neutral establishment existing in a vacuum—it is but one branch of the global capitalist nexus intimately built upon the continuous exploitation of the natural world in a sustained effort to ensure profits for its stakeholders. A perfect illustration of the offensive nature of capitalism, zoos are premised on pillaging wild animal habitats and perverting natural existence to "artificially sustained exhibits" (Best, NDb, para. 1). It begins with the capture.

Securing animals as elements for zoo and aquarium exhibits involves a harrowing form of entrapment and capture; humans go into animal habitats, chase them until they retreat, and tear desirable specimens away from their families while animals struggle and actively resist in response to the immense fear they experience (Best, NDb; Regan, 2004). Research on the social capacities of whales and dolphins suggests that they possess unique cultures, have highly-developed emotional capacities, and rely heavily on connections with their kin and social communities for survival and well-being (even more so than humans) (Rendell & Whitehead, 2001; White, 2000; Zoocheck, 1998). Acknowledging the nature of these exceptionally social animals raises particularly salient moral questions on the brutality of wild capture as forcible separation of families is an incredible source of stress, depression, and trauma (Jensen, 2007; Sorenson, 2008; Zoocheck, 1998). Further, it is a troubling realization that the captive zoo and

aquaria industry is essentially predicated on intruding on animals' natural spaces, kidnapping them from their terrestrial and ocean environments (where aquatic animals such as dolphins, for instance, are known to swim upwards of forty miles a day), and confining its victims to a life of solitary confinement—essentially prison (Acampora, 2010; Malamud, 1998; Regan, 2004; Sorenson, 2008). This is especially difficult to reconcile as animals in "aqua-prisons"¹⁸ have committed no criminal act; rather, they are punished to a life of desolate existence for simply being animals in an anthropocentric world (Regan, 2004).

Zoocheck Canada (a protection agency for wild animals in captivity) maintains that confining marine animals to concrete tanks is entirely indefensible as human-made enclosures are wholly inadequate in fulfilling their complex needs, much less at replicating their natural oceanic existence with its vast space, and complex ecosystems. Instead aquatic animals are relegated to a substandard quality of life, denied the opportunity to engage in activities that are fundamental to their nature. These include: "seeking shelter, nest sites, mates and food resources; avoiding predators and parasites; defending territories; and exploring new spaces" (Zoocheck, 1998, p. 8-9), as well as communicating and interacting with their environment via echolocation. Auditory sensory deprivation (which has significant implications for proper physical and psychological development) is not the only concern though; as Jean-Michel Cousteau notes, aquariums also become traps of sensory overload, what he refers to as "acoustic jails", where marine animals must inhibit their natural inclinations for auditory communicative signals in order to not be driven insane from the entrapped sounds (Sorenson, 2008, p. 207; Zoocheck, 1998). This proneness for psychosis (or "zoochosis") (Best, NDb, The School of Disinformation section, para. 6) seems to be an inevitable outcome of captivity; entrapped animals in zoos and

¹⁸ See: Dunayer, J. (2001). *Animal equality: Language and liberation*. Derwood, MD: Ryce Publishers.

aquariums regularly display stereotypes¹⁹ such as tongue-rolling, head-bobbing, compulsive rocking, circular pacing, and even self-mutilation (Best, NDb).

In Zoocheck's comprehensive report on the state of Marineland's facility as substantiated by an array of wildlife authorities, contributors Samantha Lindley (veterinarian) and Doug Cartlidge (former zoo trainer) raised a strong concern about stereotypes being evident in Marineland's bears and dolphins (Zoocheck, 2008). In addition, Zoocheck's report also documented numerous other animal welfare concerns brought forward by experts including: chipping paint and excessive use of chlorine and other chemicals in animals' tanks— a "toxic soup" of skin and eye irritants (Sorenson, 2008, p. 206), lack of daylight exposure while indoors, unmet minimum space requirements as set by the American²⁰ Welfare Act, lack of enrichment initiatives for animals' mental stimulation, inadequate shelter for terrestrial animals, and poor diets and undernourishment (e.g. bears are so hungry they resort to begging patrons for food which is often marshmallows and unlabelled 'food pellets' sold at Marineland kiosks, while deer eat their own fecal matter— an obvious sign of a poor diet lacking nutrients).

It is clear that zoos and aquariums are implicated in a number of distressing practices. Perhaps more unnerving than the obvious signs of physical and emotional distress displayed by captive animals though is the realization that the animal on display is but an empty fragment of his/her true self— a distorted subject ripped of its essence, a 'shell' missing its wild nature (Jensen, 2007; Regan, 2004). As Rensberger argues, zoo animals in captivity cannot be viewed and understood in an honest sense; the very fact that the "dynamic equilibrium" of the animal's body and natural environment has been severed means that one can never experience a zoo

¹⁹ A 'stereotypy' refers to a repeated behaviour exhibited by an animal suffering from psychological illness or disturbance--not as a result of any natural proclivity, but typically exhibited in captive environments (Malamud, 1998)

²⁰ Since Canada has no laws regulating adequate standards of care for marine mammals in captivity, experts will often cite standards set by American Animal Welfare laws.

animal in any meaningful way as *whole* nor accurate (as cited in Malamud, 1998, p. 3). As a result, zoo patrons wishing to have an interactive bond with the animal on display will not realize that desire in any meaningful sense— only a warped one (Jensen, 2007). As John Berger states: "The zoo to which people go to meet animals, to observe them, to see them, is, in fact, a monument to the impossibility of such encounters" (1980, p. 19). Understanding this notion more fundamentally, it becomes easier to unveil illusory and anthropomorphic perceptions we have about zoo animals, such as the delusion of the dolphin "smile" as an indicator of his/her happiness (Laidlaw, 2010; O'Barry, 1999) and the ridiculousness of circus tricks they perform. It may also help to lift the veil in order to more clearly see the depressing display of learned helplessness and listless wandering of animals in their enclosure with seemingly no purpose (Jensen, 2007).

Another key aspect of animal captivity that has been discussed in the literature is the "hidden world" of other accompanying nefarious practices that underscore its basis. Laidlaw (2010) discusses how marine aquariums and "swimming with dolphins" programs in tourist resorts are inherently tied to violent globalizing practices whereby dolphins are rounded up for capture in the sea, "desirable" captivity candidates will be sold into the entertainment industry, while the rest are slaughtered en masse for food (often mislabeled and sold to consumers as "whale" meat) (DuPré Pesmen, Stevens, & Psihoyos, 2009). Another branch of this hidden world is the problem of surplus animals and how to manage "stock" (Jensen, 2007). Because zoo breeding programs produce animal lives in an indiscriminate commodified manner, inevitably there will be surplus animals that are not needed in zoos at the time they are born (due to a lack of space and resources to manage, undesirable breeding characteristics, and so on). As a result, these animals are either sold into other industries such as canned hunts and scientific

laboratories, channeled through the underworld market like the exotic wildlife trade, or "recycled" (in other words, killed) to become food for other zoo animals (Best, NDb; Green, 1999; Jamieson, 2006).

Dismantling Zoo and Aquaria Justifications

Certainly these revelations of the manifold issues around captive animal industries are unsettling and distressing. Although plagued with a number of moral deficits, zoos have managed to mask legitimate concerns around animal welfare and/or rights by constructing propaganda, and continuously invoking common-held, yet misguided "justifications" around the supposedly beneficial functions zoos are integral in promoting. One of the most common myths perpetuated is that zoos and aquariums are beset upon a desire to "save" wild (particularly endangered) animal populations through prioritizing conservation initiatives as one of their chief goals; however, this is very misleading for a couple of reasons.

First, the decision to incorporate a conservation agenda of endangered species into the zoo curriculum is entirely voluntary with approximately only two percent of endangered animals being a part of it (Best, NDb; Laidlaw, 2014). Furthermore, even if these conservation programs exist, the breeding of animals occurs in secluded facilities, not in the zoo itself (Best, NDb; Jamieson, 2006; Sorenson, 2010). This suggests that zoos' entire premise that having animals on display for the public is inherently linked to some sort of benevolent preservation initiative is nothing more than a shrewd attempt at greenwashing a corrupt industry. As Malamud (1998) notes, zoos regularly conjure "green" dialectics such as "conservation" and "preservation" in an effort to advance "ecommerce" (p. 98). As a result, zoo patrons are more easily convinced that their tickets for entry are not only guaranteeing them a day of entertainment, but also *helping* to save animals from endangerment or extinction. This is a particularly distressing advancement of

cutthroat capitalist ventures underneath the liberalized beliefs and actions of a perhaps well-meaning but naïve general populace. Advocacy for wild animals is reduced to buying into the industry intent on exploiting them. Another counterpoint to consider is that zoos regularly capture a greater number of animals from the wild than they ever intend on returning and regularly breed animals in captivity that are unfit for survival in the wild; this suggests that these conservation initiatives and justifications are actually not about conserving wild animal populations, but rather conserving the zoo industry itself (Jamieson, 2006; Laidlaw, 2014).

Another typical rationalization zoo officials defend is their supposed 'educational' value they provide to visitors. As several authors suggest though (see: Acampora, 2010; Best, NDb; Jamieson, 2006; Laidlaw, 2014; Sorenson, 2010), rather than receiving a truly beneficial and educational experience, the only thing many patrons will take from zoos with is a distorted sense of natural processes and a belief in the legitimacy of human domination over animals. In other words, zoos perpetuate a form of "bad education". As previously discussed, animals in zoos represent a fraction of their true being since captivity deadens animals' natural sensibilities and behaviours, thus creating very damaged beings. As a result, what zoo goers learn from seeing imprisoned animals are the current and after-effects of solitary confinement, not their true nature (Best, NDb). Furthermore, zoos' attempts to augment captive displays and interactive animal shows with pieces of educational material in the form of small plaques and soundbites are not a clear priority (Best, NDb). At Marineland for instance, Dr. Naomi Rose (marine mammal scientist) concludes that educational standards as enforced by the American Marine Mammal Protection Act are unfulfilled. In Zoocheck's report, she states:

The dolphin show was almost devoid of biological information. About three or four pieces of factual information were imparted (e.g., a dolphin has 88 teeth; demonstrating fluke presentation, a medical behavior), but the show was

accompanied primarily by background music and non-informational exhortations to the audience (e.g., "Clap your hands!"). (Zoocheck, 1998, p. 20)

As this example shows, many zoos and aquariums make meager efforts to provide some information about animals in an arguably weak attempt to deflect criticism that zoos do not promote education. It could further be argued that these tidbits of facts are mutually exclusive to the zoo structure which keeps animals captive; in other words, providing rich and comprehensive educational accounts of animals in the wild does not necessitate the accompaniment of a captive animal on display. This function could better be served in places like museums rather than zoos that serve a primarily economic function of generating profits at the expense of animals' well-being (Regan, 2004).

Perhaps the most problematic form of "education" patrons attain from a visit to the zoo is that of legitimizing human supremacy over animals. While zoos regularly claim that they provide an opportunity for people to engage in a meaningful and necessary interaction with animals as a way to foster *compassion* and *respect* for them, what people (in particular children) likely leave with is an ill-conceived sense of compassion and respect for these creatures since these institutions are entirely contradictory to a compassionate environment— rather one inherently built upon subordination, exploitation, and cruelty (Sorenson, 2010; Malamud, 1998). As

Michael W. Fox observes:

There can be no communion with our animal kin when they are held captive, no matter what their reasons may be for protective custody. The zoo is a trick mirror that can delude us into thinking we can love and respect animals and are helping to preserve them. . . We cannot recognize or celebrate the sanctity and dignity of nonhuman life under such conditions. There can be no communion: only amusement, curiosity, amazement, and perhaps sympathy.
(as cited in Malamud, 1998, p. 2)

In addition, patrons subtly internalize a false and dangerous anthropocentric superiority complex where animals are seen as commodities who exist purely for our reasons (Best, NDb; Jamieson,

2006). Patrons of zoos have the ability to purchase time with animals' bodies for momentary²¹ viewing pleasure, and irrationally believe that not only do animals exist for our frivolous amusement, but that limiting their autonomy and freedom in these man-made enclosures is entirely defensible (Jensen, 2007; Malamud, 1998). This is a disturbing and deeply speciesist belief reinforced by the zoo structure. In critically dismantling this and other common justifications put forth by zoos and aquariums, it becomes more apparent what the motives behind such places are, which is to practice and make a marvel of human exploitation of the natural world. As Jensen (2007) claims: "...the urge to exploit comes first, and justifications must be found to support this urge" (p. 88).

With its moral quandaries clearly affirmed, next I explore the ways in which zoos and aquariums are inherently tied to notions of imperialism and domination.

Imperialist Roots

The first zoo made its appearance 4300 years ago in the ancient city of Ur located in the Mesopotamia region. From the time of its inception centuries ago, zoos have historically been recognized as powerful symbols of imperial domination—the animals a representation of lesser and "othered" beings under the control of a human elite (Best, NDb). This trend of dominionism by keeping visible "others" in menageries continued into the nineteenth century where not only animals but also certain humans deemed "animalistic"—racialized people such as the Hottentot Venus—were subjugated as a result of colonial ventures (Best, NDb; Malamud, 1998). While we may frown upon the objectionable exhibiting of human and non-human "freaks" of the past (by bourgeois businessman like P.T. Barnum), zoos today, premised on similar exploitative power relations, remarkably remain unscrutinized. This is an odd and disappointing

²¹ In his book, Jensen (2007) highlights a 1985 research study conducted at Regent's Park which demonstrated that zoo patrons, on average, spent a meager 46 seconds at each animal display.

misjudgement as the contemporary zoo very much embodies the shameful exploits displayed by modern-day imperialism. In other words, human visitors hold a privileged position as a spectator, freely and autonomously gazing at the animals at will, while animals are denied privacy, natural surroundings, and of course the ability to escape such insufferable circumstances (Malamud, 1998).

Invoking a Foucauldian analysis, Malamud bridges a commonality between the prison and the zoo. Foucault maintained in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* that the crux of the prison's purpose lies in "its very materiality as an instrument and vector of power" between dominant and subordinate humans (as cited in Malamud, 1998, p. 117). Likewise the zoo's primary function is to rationalize, even celebrate the uneven power relations between humans and animals that permeate our society. The zoo then is not only an abject display of human mastery over animals and nature, but also a site where "speciesist bigotry" and human apathy for nature is illuminated in profound ways (Malamud, 1998, p. 133). As Best (NDb) states: "When we stare through the bars at confined animals, at the hirsute commodities imprisoned for entertainment value, we peer into the face of our own alienation" (The Berlin Wall of Species section, para. 4). Here it is important to consider that zoos are just as much a commentary about us humans as it is as about the status of animals, and as the literature have voluminously suggested, captivity does not bode well for either of us.

This literary overview has attempted to illuminate the ethical consequences inherently associated with captivity. Recognizing this as a critical issue necessitating intervention, animal advocates are likely to consider the ways in which one ought to approach it successfully. Next, I outline and deconstruct the complexities of advocates' ideological orientations through an

examination of some of the most prominent outlooks, and the scholars and/or activist public figures that forward them as appropriate rationales.

4.2 Spectrum of Prominent Theoretical Ideologies in Animal Advocacy

In chapter three I alluded to the most commonly understood theoretical dualism in animal advocacy: the opposing paradigms of welfare versus rights (similarly analogous to the reform or revolution debate put forth by Marxist philosopher Rosa Luxemburg in anti-capitalist circles) (see Luxemburg, 1900). In framing the central goals of this thesis, I initially outlined this simplistic binary in order to alert the reader to the most prominent theoretical and practical differences in each approach without immediately unpacking the more overly-complex nature of the debate. Moving forward, though, it would be irresponsible to categorically demarcate these positions in such an austere manner; the complexities matter and ought to be unpacked with regards to meanings, motivations, and implications which vary considerably. With that said, here I intend to provide a comprehensive review and discussion of the nuances in the welfare versus rights debate through an examination of a variety of key figures' perspectives. While I make a concerted attempt to be as inclusive as possible of the various streams of theoretical underpinnings guiding animal advocacy, I recognize this is not an exhaustive list as there will always be variations between and among categories, across people, and across time. Nevertheless, I maintain that these points of view largely dominate the discursive terrain in animal advocacy today, and illuminating and unpacking these ideological positions documented in existing literature aid in contextualizing how these perspectives resonate with fit my specific case study.

Traditional Animal Welfare: Beyond "Old Speciesism", Towards "Humane Use"

If one were to poll the general population about whether animals possess sentience²², undoubtedly the majority would not dispute this notion. In contrast to a callous disregard for the emotional capacities of animals exemplified in the view of philosopher René Descartes²³, arguably the majority of people would maintain that animals certainly have interests and ought to be handled with care and respect. This kind of empathetic response is typically facilitated through our personal interactions with our own animal kin, such as companion animals like cats and dogs. We as a Western society have largely shifted away from a dominant sentiment of what Joan Dunayer (2004) calls "old speciesism", whereby animals' interests are completely disregarded from our moral consciousness, and are seen as deserving minimal or no consideration (p. 7). However, while "old speciesist philosophy" which explicitly discounts the value of animals has become less accepted in our more liberal and accepting²⁴ society, mainstream advocacy for animals ironically follows an old speciesist logic (p. 9). What Dunayer (2004) means here is that merely seeing animals as sentient beings does not necessarily translate into a dismissal of pervasive speciesism. Speciesism is a complex mentality that operates in illusory ways, and is continually upheld as a normative belief system, ironically at times in concert with a supposed belief in a love for animals. Because speciesism is such an embedded reflection of our "culture of prejudice", animals have been structurally categorized as the "other" and the conditions of their exploitation are part of what is naturalized as *just* and *normal*

²² Sentience refers to the possessing of subjectivity characterized by an ability to feel both pleasure and pain, and having interests in maximizing pleasure and minimizing pain (Francione, 2000).

²³ Descartes saw animals as nothing more than emotionless "automatons" and went on to erroneously claim that "they cry the same way a clock would chime" (Sorenson, 2010; Spiegel, 1996, p. 24).

²⁴ While Western society as a whole holds onto the notion of embracing more liberal and progressive practices that does not discriminate but rather accepts others unequivocally, this is mostly rhetoric that is highly contentious when examining the continuing realities of subordinated and disenfranchised "others" (human and non-human).

(Blackwell, Smith & Sorenson, 2003, p. 13; Sorenson, 2010). As a result, the way the status-quo see and/or advocates for animals is certainly peculiar and contradictory.

In her book *Speciesism*, Dunayer (2004) discusses how "old speciesist advocacy" takes various forms. These include: employing speciesist language in animal advocacy campaigns (e.g. pronouns that "thingify" animals—*that* versus *he/she*), justifying a certain amount of harm inflicted on animals if it returns favorable outcomes for humans (analogous to a utilitarian²⁵ view on animal ethics), and "welfarism". While I will discuss Dunayer's views on the pitfalls of welfarism at greater length in another section below, suffice it to say here that welfarism is arguably the most prominent form of animal advocacy today as it fits in nicely with a liberal view of balancing human and animal interests: i.e. that humans can continue to consume²⁶ animals as they wish (not requiring radical shifts in their lifestyles), so long as there are, seemingly, measures in place that protect animals' interests in not suffering unnecessarily²⁷ (Francione, 2010). This welfarist discourse, what I refer to as "traditional welfare", advances the belief that animal use in and of itself presents few to no problems with the addendum that "humane" measures are sanctioned and enforced (as seen in cruelty statutes like the Animal Welfare Act, the Humane Slaughter Act, and so on). Whether or not efforts at ensuring "humane" treatment are prioritized and/or reflect *actual* humane treatment is another matter however, which will be discussed further in discussions that follow on animal rights and/or liberation.

²⁵ Utilitarianism refers to a philosophy which advocates courses of action that advance the maximization of happiness and the minimization of pain for those involved through a cost-benefit analysis.

²⁶ When I say consume, I am referring to the consumption of animal bodies in a literal and figurative sense—not simply the consumption of their flesh and secretions as food, but also the consumption of the practices that maintain their subordination, such as the entertainment, vivisection and textile industries which sell living and dead animals.

²⁷ The notion of "unnecessary suffering" in this context is subject to considerable critique. Many people in the general population maintain that animal suffering is an unavoidable reality that accompanies humans' consumption of them out of necessity. However, as Francione (2008) asserts, the vast majority, if not all of animal use is unnecessary, therefore their suffering is almost, if not entirely, unnecessary.

Traditional welfare reflects and supports liberal notions of "choice", making it a very desirable position for the masses of society to condone. In other words, consuming animals is seen as a rational choice we as humans have the ability of making with the qualification that we place value on the importance of animal welfare and justify our actions through "humane" rhetoric. In addition to being the dominant position of the general population, several scholars also advance welfarist logic in their argumentation. This includes those who are vehemently anti-animal rights and defend ideas around human exceptionalism and anthropocentrism, such as Wesley J. Smith (2010), as well as those who offer romanticized depictions of sustainable and compassionate consumption of animals through a return to pastoral, "organic" family farms and away from the corporatization exemplified in agribusiness, as seen in the works of Michael Pollan (2006) and Kathy Rudy (2011). In contrast to this modestly reformist mentality though, those who consider themselves more inclined to a rightist and/or liberationist view on animal advocacy view the traditional welfare perspective as misguided at best, and deliberately misleading at worst. Before unpacking the major tenets of rights and/or liberation philosophy though, in the next section I discuss some misunderstood arguments around animal rights and/or liberation in popular discourse in order to clearly articulate a more consistent approach to animal rights and/or liberation.

Discursive Inconsistencies on Animal "Rights" and "Liberation"

Given that the tenets of traditional welfare advocacy are hypocritical and contradictory to animals' interests in not suffering or being exploited, alternative avenues could be explored. Instead of participating in the "happy exploitation movement" by consuming "humane meat" or any other animal products cleverly marketed to disguise their unpleasant realities (Francione, 2010; LaVeck, 2014; Stănescu, 2010), many people embrace a more progressive path: animal

rights. While noble in intent, the paradigm of rights is not monolithic and is often mischaracterized in everyday discourse, even by well-intentioned people. In other words, rather than be understood as a singular vision in animal protection, animal rights embodies conflicting characterizations as a result of various constructions; as such, what it entails and how it can be achieved is regularly debated by its various proponents. Here and in the sections that follow, I analyze this discursive terrain by examining the central tenets of various animal studies scholars' perspectives on rights and place their arguments in conversation. In this section more specifically, I seek to reveal some theoretical inconsistencies in regards to "rights" by scholars who arguably are not fighting for emancipation of all animals, but ironically a more "considerate subordination" of some or all animals.

For instance, one of the most oft-cited figures in animal rights is Australian philosopher Peter Singer, specifically because of his influential text *Animal Liberation*. While regularly upheld as the "*father of the modern animal rights movement*", Singer advances a utilitarian rather than a rights view, whereby animals may be used in certain situations if it maximizes the benefits humans may accrue on a larger scale (whether that be the perceived²⁸ gains from animals used in scientific research, to the palatable pleasures derived from animal products), and with the caveat that animals are treated "humanely" (Francione, 2010). It is important to note though that Singer sees it as speciesist to grant human interests above those of animals based on an anthropocentric hierarchy, and as such argues that we ought to extend to animals "equal consideration" just as we would to humans (Singer, 1975, p. 2); when animals are used it is then an aggregate result of a cost-benefit analysis of the maximal benefits that result for the majority (of humans).

²⁸ Here I draw attention to the highly contestable rationalization that animal research, or vivisection, produces viable and beneficial data for human health. While it may uncritically be perceived as beneficial by the general public, critical scientific scholars, including work done by Greek & Shanks (2009), suggest otherwise.

Clearly prioritizing an equal consideration of interests is not necessarily consistent with an approach to rights, as rights entails the *legal* protection of interests that cannot be revoked no matter what benefits others may gain from doing so (Francione, 1995). Further, it is highly problematic that Singer titled his work *Animal Liberation* when his philosophical underpinnings are far from rights and/or liberation. While there are some important observations and arguments put forth by Singer in *Animal Liberation* (especially for those who are new to the topic), it is irresponsible for him to use terms such as rights and liberation without rigorous consideration of the implications of what he is *actually* advocating (i.e. utilitarianism).

Further, Singer's advocacy has become less radical over the years with his viewpoints gradually shifting away from his initial ethical proclivities by backing practices that are morally questionable (Davis, 2011). For instance, as Francione (2010) points out, Singer characterizes himself as a "flexible vegan" (p. 11) occasionally consuming animal products if he can justify it for convenience or taste, and that the pain inflicted on the animals was minimal²⁹.

Similarly, Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson (2010), another animal rights scholar, also oddly advances welfarist justifications in sections of his work *The Face on Your Plate: The Truth About Food* even as the majority of the time he appears to be fighting for animal rights. For instance, Masson's book is centrally premised on the case for the necessity of veganism over welfarism and "humane" justifications in regards to ethics and human health; yet, he contradicts himself in chapter two by stating that if people are going to consume animals, they ought to ensure that they come from places such as organic farms where animals are raised "humanely" (p. 101). Masson also characterizes himself as "vegan-ish" rationalizing the consumption of animal secretions like milk products and eggs in certain cases (for instance, to not appear rude at

²⁹ This is a highly problematic justification as pain is subjective and cannot be measured nor experienced by anyone other than the subject. It is a dubious rationalization usually promoted as a way to justify participation in wrongdoing.

a dinner party), especially since, to others, the reality of animal suffering is more disguised in animal secretions than in meat (p. 139). Of course, just because people's perceptions about the severity of animal suffering regarding animal products versus meat may be misguided, this does not change the reality for animals, making his rationalization weak. When theorists and animal advocates such as these employ the language of rights within murky argumentation, and when they engage in these types of contradictory practices, it ultimately serves to weaken the credibility of the term, and leaves confused understandings of its core principles. Nevertheless, while Singer and Masson advance contradictory arguments, Tom Regan—a renowned American philosopher on animal ethics—offers a clearer point of view on what he deems to be appropriate criteria for animals to possess rights (although the moral rationale behind it is debatable).

Regan (1984) maintains that *some* animals are "subjects-of-a-life" (p. 243) and are thus granted consideration into the realm of personhood³⁰ (i.e. should be granted rights). Regan sets forth particular criteria for animals to be deemed "subjects-of-a-life", particularly around their cognitive capacities over and above their sentient ones. As a result, only certain animals are to be justifiably thought of and advocated for as rights-holders based on some sort of anthropocentric yardstick (Francione, 2010). The fact that Regan enforces a particular standard animals must hold in order to be free from the reign of human domination makes any claims to his advocacy for animal rights *as a whole* questionable as it neglects to confront and dismantle more fundamental issues around human exceptionalism and speciesism.

This critical summary complicates the notion that animal "rights" is objectively defined and universally understood, especially as those foundational scholars in the field seem to offer confused and problematic positions within this paradigm. With that said, we ought to proceed

³⁰ Personhood is typically understood as a moral community with rights and legal liberties being extended only to humans as beings. In order to grant animals' rights to equal protection under the law, some advocates argue that we need to extend the realm of personhood to include (some) animals.

with caution in our understanding of animal rights. In order to provide more clarity on this topic, what follows is a summary of a more philosophically coherent and consistent approach to animal rights.

The "Abolitionist Approach"

Differing considerably from the more moderate positions of Masson, Regan, and Singer, animal rights abolitionism is an avant-garde philosophy strongly advocated by a particular sector of animal advocates. Pioneered by activists including co-founder of The Vegan Society, Donald Watson, in 1944, vegan abolitionism has been promoted and practiced for quite some time. More recently, influential theorists in the academy have taken up and advanced this notion in their argumentation, such as Joan Dunayer (2004), Steven Best (NDa) and American legal scholar Gary Francione; in particular, Francione's (ND) "Abolitionist Approach". This philosophy has enhanced the nature of animal rights discourse to become more logically sound and morally consistent; what follows is a summary and reflection of its core tenets.

Francione (1995; 2010) argues that when we speak of the need for animal rights, fundamentally we ought to be fighting for liberating animals from their property status, which entails ownership by humans, and to be recognizing their sentience as the only relevant criteria for accessing those rights (instead of anthropocentric standards like comparative intelligence propelled by theorists like Regan). According to Francione (2010), the only way animal rights can be achieved is through a rejection of their property status and the complete abolition of animal products and participation in industries that exploit animals for profit. In essence, he maintains that ethical veganism is the *only* moral baseline that is ideologically-consistent and practically effective for animal liberation from human exploitation. Rather than preoccupying ourselves with making sure we treat animals *well* in the institutions that sustain their oppression

and misery, Francione, Dunayer, and Best insist that we should reflect on the negative implications that result from commodifying animals' bodies and maintaining their institutionalization. For abolitionists, the overarching issue is “not [animal] treatment but use” (Francione, 2010, p. 15), and granting equal consideration for animals to enter the “moral community” requires abolishing the cages that legitimize ownership of one over another even if such ownership is exercised “nicely”.

Where Francione regularly fails to give credit to the work by activists of anti-slavery abolitionism across many of his writings in his development of animal rights abolitionist philosophy, Best (NDa) offers an important historical recognition of the abolitionist movement of black slaves beginning in the eighteenth century. Like animal abolitionists of today, anti-slavery abolitionists were unwilling to concede that a system of institutionalized enslavement could be reformed in ways that respect the dignity of subjugated “others”. As Best (NDa) notes: “Abolitionists viewed the institution of slavery as inherently evil, corrupt, and dehumanizing, such that no black person in bondage—however well-treated by their “masters”—could ever attain the full dignity, intelligence, and creativity of their humanity” (The Roar of Abolitionism section, para. 2). Best draws parallels between activists' calls for black people's liberation of the past³¹ and animals' liberation of the present based on moral principles of the complete eradication of exploitation and harm for humans and non-humans— not a “more kind” subordination which will always be grossly inadequate and stray from fundamental issues of justice. As both black people and animals were/are viewed as chattel commodities integral to sustaining capitalist economies, abolitionists promote fierce advocacy denouncing the continued

³¹ This is not to suggest that people of colour today do not face oppressive prejudices and practices enabled by racialization. Indeed, today's Western society is characterized as an era of “neo-racism” where people of colour experience subordination in both overt and subtle ways even though slavery has been outlawed in legal sense (Rattansi, 2007, p. 95).

operation of repressive state structures (Best, NDa; Francione, 1995; Spiegel, 1996). For abolitionists, giving credence to reformist advocacy has been and continues to be seen as antithetical to progress. Francione (2010) outright dismisses this reformist advocacy, referring to it as "new welfarism" (p. 5).

According to the perspectives of Francione, Dunayer, and Best, new welfarism undermines the revolutionary goals of animal rights and/or liberation in favor of inadequate and arguably backwards reformist tactics. As opposed to the goals of *traditional* welfarists outlined above, *new welfarists* promote measures to make the conditions of animals within various sectors more humane in the hopes of eventually reaching the end-goal of animal rights and/or liberation. To abolitionist theorists, new welfarism is highly problematic on both theoretical and practical grounds; while to an uncritical observer it may appear like a suitable step that is not only easier to achieve but also a progressive step for reducing animal harm, it is actually counter-productive to animal rights and/or liberation and further entrenches animals in the property paradigm that even well-intentioned advocates seek to dismantle. It does this by enabling the general population to embrace what Francione (2008, p. 32) calls the "humane treatment principle"—a false reassurance that "humane" consumption is possible and that standards of care have improved in ways that are morally significant because "unnecessary" suffering is seen as wrong; in other words, it gives precedence to the populist idea that welfare in and of itself is a noble and acceptable end-goal when it is not (Best, NDa; Dunayer, 2004; Francione, 2010). Francione (1996; 2008; 2010) provides other strong arguments that new welfarism is deleterious to the animal rights and/or liberation movement. In addition to maintaining that its advocacy is ideologically inferior to abolitionist principles of moral justice, practically speaking, he claims that welfare standards are actually economically advantageous to industry (see: Francione,

2010). He also suggests that it sends contradictory messages to those interested in advocacy (seen in his critique of "single-issue campaigns" and vegetarian³² advocacy), and that the animal movement claims victory when animal industries adhere to even weak welfare standards (as seen in their partnerships with corporations like McDonald's) (see: Francione 2008, 2010). While these claims are persuasive and worth considering, there is some resistance to Francione's assessment of new welfarism from other abolitionists and those who advocate incremental reform.

Animal Liberation and "New Abolitionism"

In terms of its fundamental arguments, Best (NDa) tends to agree with Francione's critique of welfarist advocacy. However, he maintains that Francione's approach softens the critical nuances embedded within the debate (which will be explored further in the next section). Furthermore, Best insists that Francione's advocacy is largely limited to his sole, albeit persuasive, rhetoric in favor of ethical veganism even while he continually acts "as a mouthpiece for the state" by demonizing direct action tactics that are in opposition to the law, but have been integral to the progress of historical emancipatory social movements (Best, NDa, In Defense of Direct Action section, para. 2; Gelderloos, 2007). These direct action tactics include: civil disobedience, open rescues of caged animals, violent³³ militancy including property destruction, and so on. Best's advocacy for "new abolitionism" is a more critical approach to animal liberation than is Francione's, and as such I think a theoretical distinction can be made here in

³² Since vegetarianism presents significant moral issues including the exploitation and abuse of female animals' reproductive systems, Francione is highly concerned about legitimating vegetarian advocacy as an incremental step to veganism as a moral matter. He likens its abhorrent practices with that of meat production, and even goes further by saying that "there is probably more suffering in a glass of milk than in a pound of steak" (G. L. Francione, personal communication, ND).

³³ Violence is a highly-contested term, especially when considering tactics employed in social movements. Some advocates mean imposing physical harm on those that harm and exploit others, but typically it is wrongly conflated with actions like property destruction that actually cause no harm but does inflict economic damage to institutions premised on inflicting harm (like factory farms, fur farms, and vivisection laboratories).

terms of animal rights versus liberation. Best (NDa) and Dominick (1997) embody anarchist approaches to abolishing human tyranny over animals; here, they advance harsh critiques of the state within a capitalist society which enables practices of speciesism, sexism, heterosexism, racism, ableism, and all other oppressive *isms* as central to its structure. Similar to the philosophy of social reformer Henry Salt and his Humanitarian League³⁴ formed in 1891, Best's advocacy for a "total liberation" paradigm (Best, 2014) and Dominick's anarchist social revolution arguments uphold animal liberation as one component of a grander struggle against capitalist despotism. In contrast, Francione's sole adherence to pacifist, non-violent animal advocacy extends from his desire to incorporate animals into the legal rights community, thus protection for animals would emerge from their legal, state-sanctioned recognition as rights-holders (and not a rejection of the state as anarchists would claim) (Best, NDa).

While there may be some differences in how the state figures into a discussion on animal rights and/or liberation, the core of abolitionist philosophy is pretty unified. Undoubtedly the abolitionist view is a very provocative argument for ethical veganism and offers a morally-consistent theoretical approach in fighting for the well-being of animals, no compromises. However, many scholars and other prominent animal advocates have alternative viewpoints on the rationality and feasibility of the Abolitionist Approach, which I address next.

The Abolitionist Approach as Absolutism?: Critiques from "New Welfarists" and the Case for Incremental Reform

As a moral doctrine, it is hard to dispute the case for abolitionism. Certainly, its theoretical tenets are morally consistent with regards to pursuing a pathway to fight for the elimination of animal exploitation. However, vegan critics of Francione's Abolitionist Approach raise several valid points to consider for an alternative approach to achieving the abolitionist end.

³⁴ See <http://www.henrysalt.co.uk/humanitarian-league>

Categorically dismissed as "new welfarists"— a label imposed on incremental animal rightists and/or liberationists by Gary Francione—, these more pragmatic advocates maintain that they too self identify as "abolitionists", just not in the limited and arguably alienating framework that has been advanced by theorists like Francione (and others such as Dunayer) (Phelps, 2011). Incrementalist animal rightists and/or liberationists argue that a pragmatic, steps-based approach through welfare reform has the potential to be more practically-desirable for animal well-being in the present and future, while being no less superior as a theoretical matter. In contrast to the speciesist understanding of traditional animal welfare—what Sztybel (2007, p. 1) accurately refers to as “animal *illfare*”— incrementalists (or "new welfarists") are not merely satisfied with humane conditions as a way to claim victory for animals. Rather, prominent public figures who support incrementalist measures, including Matt Ball (ND), Bruce Friedrich (2011), and Norm Phelps (2011) have all maintained that their advocacy has been and remains oriented to an end-goal of ethical veganism, rather than an acceptance of some welfare initiatives that celebrate "happy meat" (see: Francione, 2010). In taking a hardened position on the Abolitionist Approach as a rigid dogma only suitable within the realm of an academic ivory-tower, Phelps argues that animal advocacy needs a "two-track" strategy: that is, arguing for vegan principles through public education, while simultaneously pursuing feasible and practical strategies fit for helping animals from immense suffering in our current state of speciesist affairs (2011, Conclusions section, para. 3). Undoubtedly, a realistic assessment of our society shows that animal-use and speciesism are so deeply-entrenched that animal rights and veganism still remain seen by the masses as an *extreme* and fringe lifestyle; as a result, solely pursuing laws for complete and unfettered animal rights and/or liberation when it is largely perceived as fundamentalist is not likely to produce gains that matter to animals in any foreseeable future (Friedrich, 2011; Sztybel,

2007). To argue that animal rights is the only standard to strive for is not accurate since rights is not the 'better' approach over welfare if rights is "not a choice at all" (Szybel, 2007, p. 2-3).

In essence, a "one-track" strategy that prioritizes moral principles above tangible actions is not only narrow in scope, but it also neglects to take animals' interests in not suffering in the present seriously (Friedrich, 2011; Phelps, 2011, The Debate section, para. 2). As expressed by ecofeminist scholar and activist patrice jones³⁵ (2008), what actions we as human allies choose to do or not to do on animals' behalf has tangible results for them being either better or worse. She makes an important observation that animals have agency in expressing their misery within the institutions of oppression they have been designated to. This resistance is heard in their screams of writhing pain, and numerous documented attempts at escape (Hribal, 2010; jones, 2008). As such, it is irresponsible and abjectly morally wrong to refuse to relieve circumstances of extreme suffering for animals within our capacity for the sake of maintaining loyalty to *moral purity* principles like abolitionism.

In her article, jones discusses at length the significant differences in the amount of physical suffering felt between animals raised³⁶ in intense confinement (i.e. factory farms) versus "free-range" facilities. Her examination is a worthwhile consideration for those who fundamentally oppose welfare reform on the whole. She makes a strong point on recognizing the importance of animal sentience, and the importance of making significant differences in minimizing harm where we can (something that is often neglected when advocates get too enmeshed in abstract theory). For instance, Francione regularly draws upon a striking comparison of human torture through padded waterboarding (i.e. making a torturous practice for humans more 'comfortable') as analogous to improving conditions of intense cruelty and

³⁵ Lowercase intentional.

³⁶ Note: this does not mean that the slaughter process is any less painful in cage-free facilities.

exploitation for animals as a means to dismiss the principles of welfare reform in general. I think Jones' analysis on this point offers a strong case that the *significant* differences in reducing physical suffering are possible through some types of animal welfare advocacy (not just in offering padding to cramped cages for example), and thus are not equivalent to this example Francione provides.

Along with this theme of taking the interests of animals in the present situation seriously, scholar David Sztybel (2007) advances strong argumentation for welfare reform through his "best-caring ethics approach" (p. 1). Here he states that when faced with imperfect scenarios for the poor state of animals' well-being that we cannot easily circumvent, activists always ought to choose what actions are *best* for them. In other words, because these dire circumstances force us to use "dilemma reasoning" (2007, p. 2) in our advocacy, we can only and *should* act in the *best* possible ways for animals now, rather than neglect action entirely because it is not idealistic (i.e. producing immediate abolition). Abolitionists tend to prioritize abstract principles like rights and act in the interest of non-sentient *things* such as rights (what Sztybel refers to as "idol worship") rather than act in the interests of sentient animals (2007, p. 5). Since nothing is of value to non-sentient principles in and of themselves, to focus all efforts into moral perfectionism through all-or-nothing rights is an "oddly anthropocentric" way of fighting for the best interests of animals (Sztybel, 2007, p. 4). To put this into perspective, Ball (ND, Conclusions section, para. 1) offers an example that illuminates what Sztybel's best-caring ethics approach embodies, as opposed to abolitionism as rigid absolutism:

If you were being tortured 24 hours a day in a prison cell, would you want an absolutist on your side? Would you ask that no one on the outside try to stop your torture because it has to be "freedom or nothing at all"? Would you believe that the worse treatment and the greater your suffering, the closer you would be to freedom? Or would you prefer that someone bring to light your circumstances and

enact reforms that could significantly reduce your suffering, while also working towards your liberation?

This analogy illustrates an alternative and worthy viewpoint for advocacy for animal victims as opposed to uncompromised adherence to moral perfectionism embodied in "one-track" abolitionism. As important as seeking to bring about better treatment may be though, one should be wary to suggest that any and all strategies to bring about better treatment in the present are uniformly positive. As Jones argues, while we should not engage in blanket dismissal of welfare reform as a whole (as abolitionists like Francione regularly do), we should be critical about what *specific* implications arise from *particular* types of welfare reform which can vary considerably (some having the potential to promote sentiments of traditional "humane" welfarism among the general public, for example). In my observations, there is merit in Francione's critique of animal advocacy aligning with industries like McDonald's to implement minimal welfare standards, and then celebrating these corporations as "saviors" for animals; but, this type of problematic welfare reform is very different from initiatives to ban battery cages and gestation crates on a legislative level (especially as it is regularly accompanied with a vegan message) in order to relieve animals of excess suffering in the present. As Jones maintains, welfare reform is not necessarily the unequivocal problem; it is only when we "sing the praises of 'cruelty-free' eggs" for example, that the general public draws confused conclusions on how we ought to treat animals (2008, p. 15).

In further consideration for the case for incremental advocacy, Sztybel argues it is *conducive* to eventually achieving abolitionism, not destructive. By "planting the seeds" of vegan ethics (as evidenced by new economic research³⁷, and seen with the rise in popularity of vegetarianism and veganism, especially in European countries where welfarism is more greatly

³⁷ A recent study done by agricultural economists at Kansas State University found that "as a whole, media attention to animal welfare has significant, negative effects on US meat demand" (Phelps, 2011, para. 1).

prioritized), welfare reform helps to shift public perceptions in favor of animals who are normatively "othered" and dismissed (Ball, ND; Garner, 2010; Sztybel, 2007). Indeed, a history of successful social movements shows that even in pursuit of ultimate wins, progress was fought and achieved through incremental degrees (such as the anti-slavery movement, and the women's rights movement) (Ball, ND; Sztybel, 2007). In relation to current leftist struggles against capitalism, it would be absurd to dismiss efforts to improve living conditions for the working-class because of some unfounded anxiety that these efforts would somehow pacify a revolutionary, anti-capitalist sentiment (Garner, 2010).

Furthermore, while vegan education for the masses is certainly a necessity in order to understand and alleviate the root causes of suffering, Garner cautions advocates about the possibility that the "go vegan" campaign can backfire and be labeled as a dogmatic "moral crusade" (2010, p. 147). Incremental welfare advocacy accompanied with a vegan message helps coalesce the general public into the movement rather than immediately scare them off with a hardened stance of moral purity (Garner, 2010).

What I have attempted to demonstrate here is that there is considerable nuance within what is casually dismissed as "new welfarism", and animal advocates ought to critically engage with its various arguments, motivations, and implications before dismissing it as inadequate and backwards. Furthermore, the arguments espoused by incrementalist advocates here help illuminate the problems of essentialist, "black and white" thinking regularly put forth by abolitionist philosophy. What follows is an alternative analysis that frames the discussion of this debate in a new way.

Dismantling "The Myth of the Great Divide": Unity in Advocacy

Thus far the discussion on animal advocacy has showcased two ideological positions, weighing the costs and benefits of each approach. While the complexities of abolitionism and incremental welfare reform have been illuminated through a critical examination of various influential perspectives, Joy (2012) maintains that framing this discussion on advocates' ideological leanings and strategies as inherently opposed is a counter-productive division, one that serves to perpetuate a false dichotomy between those fighting for ultimately the same goal: animal liberation.

Joy argues that as opposed to animal advocates trying to maintain an ideological gridlock between welfare and abolition, their time and energy would be better spent in trying to move past ideological rifts by creating dialogues of *cooperation* that see diversity of perspectives as a strength, not a weakness. Calling attention to the lack of mutual understanding and dialogue between welfare and abolition sides, Jones similarly sees the debate as problematic—one which encourages a "groupthink" mentality as a result of having to "pick a side". Joy casts a critical eye on what she refers to as "The Myth of the Great Debate" (The Myth of the Great Debate: "Welfarism versus Abolitionism" section, para. 1) in terms of abolition and welfare, which serves to perpetuate these positions as opposing sides, creating "winners" and "losers", ultimately moving vegans away from constructive dialogues to help propel their cause.

When animal advocates clench onto ideological positions as integral to their identity, they often amalgamate ideology with tactics refusing to make any compromises in fear that they may come across to others as hypocritical, inconsistent, and confused. However, while not completely discounting the power of language and argumentation in ideological positioning, Joy points out that these philosophical underpinnings can be a debilitating social construct that

moves us away from action and cohesion. Too much loyalty to a singular view helps enable a belief in the "Myth of the Great Divide" between different types of activists, when in actuality the differences are likely minor (Joy, 2012, The Myth of the Great Divide: United and Divided We Stand section, para. 1). As was pointed out in the previous section, many animal activists who advocate for incremental changes to an abolitionist end are somehow denied identification with the "abolitionist" label because animal advocates with more (academic) prestige (like Francione) have somehow managed to claim ownership on that term and what it *actually* means (Phelps, 2011). As Joy rightfully notes though, those categorically labeled as "new welfarists" when their ultimate goals are animal rights and/or liberation may resent the application of a welfare label by *true* abolitionists since the uncritical general population may not see the distinction between traditional welfarism and new welfarism; rather, they merely see welfarism as a unifying label which can dangerously confuse the goals of vegan activists and agribusiness giants (which are certainly different) among the general populace.

Overall, Joy maintains that the effects of perpetuating ideological divisions between activists are potentially damaging to a burgeoning vegan movement by immobilizing any possibility for alliances. The effect of this false perception that abolitionists and new welfarists occupy opposite ends of the ideological spectrum is of course to strengthen animal industries who rely on animal advocates using their time and energy to fight against each other rather than to fight corporations that exploit animals (Phelps, 2011). As Will Potter states: "If your main form of 'animal activism' is attacking other animal activists, then you are one of the animal abusers' best assets" (personal communication, September 7, 2012).

Joy's observations here are certainly an important consideration for the animal rights and/or liberation movement today where the welfare versus abolition theoretical debate has

gained prominence in academic and activist circles. Indeed, this piece by Joy is a product of her own thoughtful consideration of an important theme in animal social movements— that is, what is the 'right' answer in the welfare versus abolition debate? These informing literatures and accompanying critical assessments on the theoretical spectrum of animal advocacy provide insight into what is often understood as an overly-simplified dualism. Certainly, this assessment is useful in understanding the potential implications arising from various approaches in anti-Marineland animal advocacy, within the context of the entertainment sector. Related, what follows is a discussion on the tactics of and state responses to various animal advocacy social movements that emerge from these ideological approaches, and the linkages to other historical and contemporary progressive, leftist³⁸ social struggles.

4.3 Progressive Social Movements (Human and Non-Human)

At this point, one might ask how different ideological positions on suitable and effective animal advocacy manifest themselves through practical avenues. Here I explore the successes and roadblocks of a variety of human and non-human social movements, especially in a Canadian context.

Certainly the nature of the position, whether moderate or radical, determines the strategies and tactics employed, each carrying their own political persuasions and implications. Looking at animal advocacy in Canada, Charlotte Montgomery's (2000) book *Blood Relations: Animals, Humans, and Politics* is an important contribution to the literature, especially since

³⁸ While in this section I place animal advocacy movements in a discussion alongside historical and contemporary progressive, leftist movements, this is not to wholly assume that all animal advocacy movements or concern for animals exist purely on the left. While issues concerning the pursuit of animal rights/liberation should be articulated as worthwhile for the left (and sometimes is), it should also be recognized that concerns for any one of animal welfare, rights, well-being, and so on can also be seen as: a worthwhile moral issue or lifestyle niche in a depoliticized fashion (e.g. health veganism as a new realm of identity politics that advocates "green" capitalist consumerism), as a liberal concern that strays from comprehensive left politics, and even articulated on the political right.

documented sources around Canadian animal rights activism in particular is very limited. As a result, I have chosen to elaborate on this topic by framing the discussion around this text. In it, she compares and contrasts the terrain of active resistance to institutionalized animal abuse from grassroots social movements to national organizations. Illuminating individual stories of select activists, and tracking the campaigns of various groups across Canada throughout the 1980s and 1990s, Montgomery discusses the outlooks and resultant tactics of animal welfare versus animal rights groups with a particular focus on their positioning on militancy and direct action.

Moderate vs. Radical

Aligning themselves with a moderate status-quo, facilities like local humane societies and not-for-profit agencies like the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) are what Montgomery calls "the pillars of the animal welfare community" (p. 42). Because groups like these focus their energy on fighting for the interests of particular types³⁹ of animals and rescuing them from situations of non-institutionalized abuse⁴⁰, their advocacy does not represent a threat to the interests of most people who in some way or another benefit from large-scale, sanctioned animal exploitation. Rather, groups like these are praised in their efforts to help (some) animals in an unobtrusive, and *civilized* manner by *politely* operating within the confines of the state and not overstepping their boundaries.

In stark contrast to those groups perceived as acceptable by the mainstream are those more radical factions advocating alternative views, including rights and/or liberation for all animals, and an underlying message of ethical veganism. Groups like People for the Ethical

³⁹ Humane societies and societies for the protection of cruelty to animals are typically concerned about animals deemed 'companions' or 'pets', like cats and dogs, and not "othered" animals used in agriculture or vivisection (e.g. cows, chickens, pigs, rats, etc).

⁴⁰ In other words, typically from isolated cases of abuse (e.g. domestic abuse) and not institutional abuse of animals (e.g. agribusiness) which is safeguarded by speciesist law.

Treatment of Animal (PETA) and the Animal Liberation Front (ALF)⁴¹, as well as those less active such as the Animal Rights Militia (ARM), and the Justice Department (JD) remain on the peripheries of society, as state and government bodies have actively sought to position them as "radicals", "nuts" or "extremists" who need to be surveilled for their potential to engage in dangerous and criminal activity (particularly because they threaten an economic bottom-line) (p. 42). Of course, while international organizations like PETA are ridiculed by the mainstream for their radical message (i.e. veganism) and their vaudeville-style tactics and polemic campaigns (e.g. "I'd Rather Go Naked") (Phelps, 2011, p. 240), their advocacy is moderate compared to clandestine grassroots movements like the ALF, ARM, or JD who organize and operate according to their own mandates of anarchy and direct action, at times engaging in illegal activity (such as open rescues and property destruction) and actual or threats of violence⁴² (such as letter bombs and contaminated food products) to achieve those ends (Montgomery, 2000).

The "Green Scare"

In her book, in part Montgomery thoroughly explores the motivations of these more radical factions of the animal right community, and the broader implications in terms of state repression in Canadian society. For instance, while several authors (Best & Nocella II, 2004; Liddick, 2006; Lovitz, 2010; Monaghan & Walby, ND; Potter, 2011) have tracked the rise in "eco-terrorism" and the "Green Scare"⁴³ in post 9/11 American society following the enactment of the U.S Patriot Act and accompanying animal rights-specific legislation like the Animal Enterprise Protection Act (AEPA) and the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act (AETA),

⁴¹ It should be noted that the ALF is not necessarily a 'group', but rather a decentralized, underground movement of cell operations, all of whom adhere to the specific guidelines and aims of its mandate.

⁴² Threats or use of particular forms of violence against animal abusers is only advocated by the ARM and JD, not the ALF, and little data about actual incidents of violence in Canada is available from CSIS. Also, members of the ARM and JD represent a very small minority of the animal liberation community willing to engage in tactics that revolve around violence, at times through the influence of agents provocateurs.

⁴³ The Green Scare is rhetorical reference to the Red Scare in the 1950s, and refers to the government monitoring of 'threats' imposed by animal rights and radical environmental social movements.

Montgomery's work⁴⁴ considers the role of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) in monitoring and suppressing the actions of Canadian animal advocates. Similarly analogous to the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) openly stating that catching "animal rights extremists"⁴⁵ was their top priority in fighting domestic terrorism (Monaghan & Walby, ND; Potter, 2011), CSIS has been gathering intelligence on Canadian animal rights advocates for decades⁴⁶ and has publicly claimed that ALF activists represent a significant threat to society who may use violence⁴⁷ to achieve their political agenda (Montgomery, 2000). This claim by CSIS is significant as it instills fear among the general population regarding the political goals and actions of animal advocates— equating their goals for liberation, justice, and acting in the interests of compassion as analogous to terrorists who threaten the use of violence directed at civilian populations (Potter, 2011). Further, CSIS has sought to strategically disparage the goals and ideologies of animal activists in the eyes of the public as well as justify their surveillance of them by rhetorically encapsulating them under the umbrella of "extreme left-wingers" (Montgomery, 2000, p. 39). Tacitly invoking a historical reminder of the supposed failure of socialism through the fall of the Soviet Union, and the widely-pervasive Red Scare of the 1950s McCarthy era, these actions by CSIS against animal rights activists are perceived as legitimate

⁴⁴ It is important to note that Montgomery's text was published in the year 2000, and thus before the elevated rise of the "green scare" following 9/11. As such, Montgomery's assessment of the actions of CSIS is significant and important to recognize, but the reader ought also to consider the ways that this monitoring of animal activism has been exacerbated in a post 9/11 context (as documented by the preceding authors on "eco-terrorism" and the "green scare").

⁴⁵ This motivation is heavily influenced by the success of the Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC) campaign (with operations in the U.S and Canada) and the activists known as the SHAC 7. The importance of this case in the rise of "eco-terrorism" is thoroughly explored in the works of Lovitz (2010) and Potter (2011).

⁴⁶ It is worth noting though that while Canadian intelligence officials and government bodies are recognizing the important influence of U.S Green Scare policy in catching and suppressing radicals, as of yet there are no national legal bills and round-ups of activists informed by a budding "Green Scare" in Canada (although there is speculation that these kinds of measures will eventually be introduced into our society) (Monaghan & Walby, ND).

⁴⁷ The ALF mandate is premised on a commitment of non-violence to humans and animals. Their mandate states that all precautions are made to ensure that no humans or animals are harmed in their direct action tactics (like property destruction).

and necessary across the uncritical general public (Monaghan & Walby, ND; Montgomery, 2000).

Certainly then, the ways in which animal advocacy is conducted and monitored today must be contextually situated within a particular political climate. As Monaghan & Walby (ND) suggest, the rise of the "Green Scare" post 9/11 is temporally significant, and is part of a broader attack on leftist political dissidents— one that seeks to dismantle the foundation of animal rights and/or liberation groups who are often left-leaning and anti-capitalist as well as being concerned about the plight of animals. The rhetoric of "violence" and "terrorism" in the case of animal rights is then a strategic tactic employed by the capitalist state to serve political means of protecting profits rather than representing an actual national security threat. Indeed, while a number of hate groups who are deliberately violent exist (such as Neo-Nazis, white supremacists, and some right-wing fundamentalists such as anti-abortionists), these domestic threats are not taken as seriously as the supposed "threat" imposed by "eco-terrorists" at destroying the profit-margins of animal-abusing capitalists. Because of this, Monaghan & Walby (ND) emphasize the importance of "cross-movement solidarity" as successful attacks to animal rightists and liberationists by the state could set a precedent that may be used to demobilize other social justice groups in the fight against capitalism (Cross Movement Solidarity section, para. 2).

Severing Camaraderie

Further, the language of "terrorism" is so powerful in our post 9/11 North American society that the ubiquitous application of it to animal advocacy groups effectively serves to subvert support for them from the majority of the population, and even from some moderate animal welfarists (Monaghan & Walby, ND). Of course, this causes significant consequences to the success of the movement as a whole by effectively exacerbating internal divisions among

activists whereby some are seen as law abiding and *good*, and others are unfairly labeled as extremist, dangerous, and unworthy of support (Monaghan & Walby, ND; Montgomery, 2000).

As Montgomery suggests, there is a general assumption among Canadians that our political processes and public policy will reflect the interests of its citizens who effectively campaign through legal avenues. As a result, radical animal rights factions like the ALF and ARM who fight for animals through alternative and (at times) illegal avenues are perceived by the general public and other animal rights and/or liberation advocates as "social misfits" not to be taken seriously (p. 39). However, it is important to recognize that the motivations for militant direct action arise from an understanding of the state as violent, a desire to make a strong statement to structures premised on the infliction of violence to innocents, and a recognition that 'polite' activism through peaceful reformism can only return small gains for animals in the scope of ubiquitous and grandiose oppression they experience every day. As was expressed by the Western Wildlife Unit of the U.S. Animal Liberation Front in their *Memories of Freedom* booklet:

Some people within the animal rights and environmental movements believe that to achieve our goals we must present our ideas in such a way as to appeal to mainstream society, that with public support we can legislate change and influence our political representatives to see us not as a threat, but as harbingers of a new age. . . So to the apologists of the animal rights and environmental organizations who are quick to denounce the defense of the earth and animals to preserve their position and favor by our enemies we say, we are warriors, nothing more, nothing less. The ALF leaves the path of moderation to those who sincerely believe that is the road to victory. . . Without illegal action on the path in pursuit of liberty and justice, many of this century's greatest social changes would never have been achieved. (Montgomery, 2000, p.260)

Here we can see an illustration of internal divisions in the movement as a result of differing ideological inclinations on the "appropriate" means to advocate for animals. This has the potential to create tensions that may serve to weaken the strength of the cause as a whole. For

instance, while it is to be expected that traditional animal welfarists would likely never be sympathetic nor understand the rationale for strategies employed by radical animal rightists or liberationists, some prominent animal rights advocates in Canada also express sharp criticism of militant tactics. For instance, Liz White of Animal Alliance of Canada has publicly criticized illegal activism as detrimental to the cause preferring instead a "non-violent and passive" approach by limiting the group's scope of advocacy to political lobbying and educational outreach rather than even participating in legal, peaceful demonstrations (Montgomery, 2000, p. 260). Similarly, Freeman Wicklund, founder of the radical animal liberation magazine *No Compromise*, has changed his views on direct action strategies; since then he claims that these strategies are counterproductive to winning much-needed public support and now advocates a "Gandhian style of non-violence" in the fight for animal liberation (Montgomery, 2000, p. 264). In addition, in a 2005 Newsday periodical, Mike Markarian, Executive Vice President of the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), vilified ALF activists for their radicalism publicly stating: "We [HSUS] applaud the FBI and law enforcement authorities for trying to crack down and root out these criminals" (as cited in NAALPO, p. 4). Similarly, Animal Alliance Board Member, Barry Kent MacKay, has also rebuked illegal direct action for supposedly perpetuating the terrorist label the animal movement so actively seeks to separate itself from, and goes on to erroneously claim that "illegal activities make the animal movement no better than those it attacks" (Montgomery, 2000, p. 261). Stating a more moderate critique on the rationality of militant actions, Rob Laidlaw of Zoocheck claims that incremental advocacy through legal pathways has the capacity to change the social consciousness of society to a more progressive world for animals. He says: "If you demand the world be changed...you get laughed at and dismissed. But if you make sensible, specific suggestions armed with facts, you get much

farther" (Montgomery, 2000, p. 204). Moreover, former ALF prisoner Rod Coronado spoke recently about the current state of radical animal liberation movements, seeking to distance himself from the militant actions that defined his activism in the past. In an interview with the EarthFirst! Journal, he states:

I don't think we can compare this [organizing] to past decades because twenty years ago 9/11 hadn't happened and we weren't labelled as terrorists. We have to evolve and recognize that there are strong forces out there that want to treat us like criminals rather than harbingers of social change. So in that way, I can't say what the state of radical movements is like because I don't consider myself radical anymore, nor am I up on their progress. I hear about infighting, the debate on issues that distract us from being a broader more public movement that focuses on solidarity building issues with people we too often call the enemy. I'm just trying to share with new generations of activists out there what I've learned and help them realize the cost-benefit analysis of doing actions that won't lead them to prison. (R. Coronado, personal communication, February 26, 2014).

This excerpt demonstrates the willingness of some activists, like Coronado, to move beyond attempts at movement division, even if their views and strategies differ.

Learning from Past Struggles

By publicly rejecting the radical tactics of clandestine grassroots movements like the ALF and ARM, moderate animal rights advocates (like the ones mentioned above) are using their platform to not only distance themselves from radical tactics they may not personally advocate for, but also to regularly belittle the legitimacy of these types of tactics, and thus, those types of activists. This public damnation ultimately works against the interests of the cause as a whole, as it perpetuates personal and ideological rifts, severs connections and understanding between different types of activists (each carrying their own strengths), and serves to strengthen the goals of the animal exploiters and the state which actively seeks the self-destruction of the global animal advocacy social movement (Monaghan & Walby, ND). Furthermore, it is important to be aware that the success of other progressive social struggles of the past actually

came about from the kind of radical tactics and anti-statist militancy that pacifist animal advocates like White, Wicklund, and MacKay would reject.

In his book *How Nonviolence Protects the State*, Peter Gelderloos (2007) draws upon his own perspectives as a community organizer and radical activist to map a critical framework of nonviolent pacifist "resistance", demonstrating that it is not only strategically ineffective, but also racist, patriarchal, and statist. He charts a thorough historical mapping of several social movements, demonstrating that even some of the most widely-celebrated and successful "peace" movements of the past actually had important radical elements of militant resistance that are often neglected or deliberately manipulated in historical accounts. Some of these include: India's Independence movement from British colonialism, the U.S civil rights movement, the protests against the Vietnam war, and so on. As a result, Gelderloos argues that it is irresponsible for political dissidents today to uphold historical examples of pacifism as superior to direct action and (violent) militancy. Not only does it often reflect inaccurate accounts, but, more importantly, it tacitly upholds a statist system of oppression characterized by white supremacy, patriarchy, and capitalism under the guise that it has led to meaningful change towards liberation.

An understanding of this history is essential so as not to repeat the same mistakes in active struggles today, including those of animal rights and/or liberation which arguably face even greater hurdles than other human-centered social causes (as a result of widely-pervasive anthropocentrism and speciesism). Indeed, the reform versus revolution theme has plagued the left for decades—whether it be labour struggles against capitalism (Blackledge, 2004; Cox, 2010; Gindin, 2002; Luxemburg, 1900), the differential perspectives of second and third-wave

feminism (Butler, 1990; hooks⁴⁸, 1984; Jeffreys, 2009; Raymond, 2013; Seodu Herr, 2014) and of course a significant portion of the burgeoning animal advocacy struggle noted in the previous section. Thus, critically reflecting on the nuances of these ideological debates and how it has translated into on-the-ground action across movements in the past ought to pave the way for progress to be made in the future. These themes of moderate versus radical ideologies, and reformist versus militant tactics and strategies explored here will be of central importance in examining the following case study of anti-Marineland resistance. Before proceeding with the research findings though, next I map out my methodological approach to this project.

⁴⁸ Lowercase intentional

Chapter Five: Methods and Methodology

5.1 A Case for Qualitative Research

After having spent six years completing two undergraduate degrees—studying for exams, reading seemingly endless texts, summarizing and interpreting the works of acclaimed scholars, at times meandering through the routine milieu of undergraduate student life—entering into a Master's program provided me with an opportunity I had never had before: conducting original research and *contributing* knowledge, not merely rehashing or commenting on existing knowledge. The prospect of completing my own research was certainly an exciting yet daunting thought. Even with general research interests established early on, informal discussions with my peers confirmed uncertain feelings I had; narrowing a focus into one particular topic that interested me and that provided me an opportunity to provide relevant, new insights into uncharted research territory proved unnerving. However, reflecting on my social location, I quickly overcame these initial jitters and realized I was in a privileged position. Being an active member in a socially-conscious, justice-oriented community gave me insider perspectives and knowledge on issues I am passionate about and value bringing to the forefront; it then became obvious that I ought to design a research study that reflects what I am familiar with, what I want to know more about, indeed, that "begin[s] where [I am]" (Esterberg, 2002, p. 26). Initially I assumed that my research design in regards to topic formulation, participant recruitment and categorical headings of participants' ideologies would fall in sync with my a-priori assumptions; of course, research is a process not just a tangible result, and I had things to learn.

With the intent of examining Marineland animal activism as a micro-level illustration representing some of the practical and ideological turmoils plaguing animal advocacy more broadly speaking, I wanted to construct a critical qualitative research study that illuminated the

perspectives of a selectively small but focused group within my community. Rejecting the traditionally-upheld doctrine that positivist research based on the scientific method, empiricism, and "neutral" objectivity constitutes the only *true* and *valid* research paradigm, qualitative social research emphasizes a more comprehensive approach to understanding social phenomena— one that recognizes that knowledge is complex and multifaceted with subjective and interpretivist meanings (Kvale, 2006). Additionally, informed by feminist, queer, anti-racist, and other anti-oppressive research methodologies, critical qualitative research is typically motivated by the pursuit of social justice in some area; it has purpose in exposing under-examined issues as well as finding possible solutions to help dismantle structural inequality rather than to merely create esoteric knowledge for a privileged elite (Esterberg, 2002; Reid, Tom & Frisby, 2006). This is accomplished through the telling of detailed narratives of a select group of people who are oftentimes disenfranchised on the margins of society, and allowing for their active and democratic participation in the production of knowledge (Esterberg, 2002). As I had a personal interest in exploring in-depth a specific case of individuals' experiences and ideologies within a niche area of concern in order to understand and scrutinize dense theoretical debates in animal advocacy, my research project idea was certainly within the realm of critical qualitative research, and more specifically qualitative *action* research (Esterberg, 2002; May, 2002; Mills, 2000). The aims and objectives are fervently moral and political— to not only better understand complex and contrasting opinions, but also to frame the nuanced perspectives endemic to the anti-Marineland social movement as a potential tool that can be utilized by the community of people who fight for animal emancipation. Certainly, this could be a great asset to this community in times of struggle and resistance to the ubiquity of captive animal oppression.

5.2a Research Design: Participant Observation

As explained above in my discussion of how I arrived at this topic, it is clear that I have heavily-invested ties to the anti-Marineland community. It logically followed that my research methods reflected the connections I brought to the study (Esterberg, 2002). Having already been an active member in the anti-Marineland social movement seen today, I decided to undertake an ethnographic research approach through participation in and observation of the people and events at Marineland demonstrations in the 2013 opening season. Embarking on participant observation through field research constitutes more than just immersing oneself in the community under study. Rather, it is a process of actively constructing meaning and interpretations of the community through the researcher's own lens (Esterberg, 2002). Demonstrations are the main way anti-Marineland activists mobilize, and thus involvement in them are an appropriate way to examine the lived experiences of activists. Since one cannot know everything within the field, what I chose to focus on at the demonstrations reflected my own personal convictions of what I deemed worthy of highlighting⁴⁹ as relevant to understanding the experiences and goals of this community. Participating in on-the-ground activism and seeing what events transpired at demonstrations was vital in contextualizing the terrain under which Marineland animal advocacy took place. Of course, while immersion and active observation was certainly important, I deemed this method supplementary to my main research method which was in-depth semi-structured interviews of Marineland animal advocates.

⁴⁹ For context and in an effort to illustrate some of my personal observations from the front-line of activism, I also took photographs at the Marineland demonstrations which highlights some key developments from the protests. As well, I attached some of my own personal photographs from when I visited Marineland as a child in order to showcase my own journey from patron to activist (see Appendix 3).

5.2b Semi-Structured Interviews

When I was defending my proposal for this project, one of my committee members inquired of me 'why interviews' and not a focus group if my intention was to understand seemingly collective understandings on animal welfare and animal rights with two ideologically-discordant groups? While I gave consideration to this suggestion, going forth with the semi-structured interview method was more appropriate and advantageous in this project for a few reasons.

First, through my years of informal encounters with various animal activists in the Niagara region, I have heard a wide variety of opinions on various highly-contested and emotional topics on issues around animals. Certainly a discussion here on these opinions that account for all the nuances of people's complex rationales and at times contradictory attitudes on animals would be nearly impossible. Having engaged people in dialogues around animals, however, has made me aware of the general hesitancy for animal advocates to discuss various things openly with others unless there is some level of trust and rapport. There appears to be a general air of anxiety among even seemingly ideologically-homogenous animal advocates, including, a fear of being judged for not being *pure* in their advocacy, an uneasiness in not completely understanding the issue (especially in regards to intersectional politics), and tensions regarding appropriate actions and tactics that will accommodate people's convictions. Having an intuitive understanding of these general fears that are abound in the animal advocacy community, I realize it is hard to talk about controversial topics in the company of others (whether they be friends or strangers). Since I consider my project an extension of and more in-depth exploration of informal discussions I have had with others on animal welfare, rights and/or liberation, the ethics of captivity, and strategies employed in social movements, I wanted to try and ensure a

safe space for my participants to give honest and accurate answers to my questions without the fear of judgment or retaliation. In-depth semi-structured interviews with a researcher who was also invested in this struggle offered my participants that possibility to relay the complexity of their outlooks in a comfortable setting. Further, in the interview process I made a concerted effort to not only listen to the answers my participants provided, but also to engage them in a meaningful discussion where we could learn from each other premised on mutual feelings of trust and understanding. As Kvale (2006) suggests, interviews are not just a one-way dissemination of knowledge, but instead precisely translates to an "inter view, an inter change of views between two persons conversing about a common theme" (p. 44).

Recognizing this, it becomes clear then why focus groups were not a fitting tool for data collection for this particular project. While focus groups are often misunderstood as a convenient way to conduct several individual interviews simultaneously, they actually elicit responses from a group discussion that reflect a shared meaning and "collective testimony" (Esterberg, 2002, p. 109). If one were to try and understand the dynamics of a homogenous and tightly-knit group who felt comfortable sharing opinions with their comrades and generated new and honest responses in their company, focus groups would certainly be superior to interviews (Esterberg, 2002). However, as I have articulated above, I make the argument that animal advocates at Marineland and beyond rarely have homogenous outlooks on morality, politics and/or practicality of tactics that warrant group discussion. Instead, the purpose of this research is to engage and understand in-depth *difference*, not only between Marineland welfarists and rightists, but also *among* anti-captivity proponents.

Engaging in a focus group discussion also ran the risk that participants would re-evaluate their thoughts on topics depending on the group's tone; in essence, there was a much higher risk

of susceptibility to "groupthink" in an effort to remain neutral (especially seen in discussions on controversial topics) (Esterberg, 2002). Considering that the interviews with my participants did end up producing what I believe was a mutually-rewarding interaction that encouraged reflexive thinking, and elicited rich responses that did not always fit my own personal ideological inclinations, I was confident that the participants' were not catering their responses to fit what they thought I was 'looking for'. While the methodological rationale for semi-structured interviews produced positive data overall, there were some difficulties I encountered in regards to participant recruitment which will be discussed at length below.

5.3 Sampling Strategy and Methodological Obstacles

In foregrounding an interest to examine the complex and ideologically-divergent perspectives of Marineland animal advocates, I originally wanted to conduct eight interviews with Marineland animal *activists* who fell into two different categories; in other words, those who were 1) anti-captivity rights and/or liberation proponents and wanted to see the park shut down, and 2) those that did not want to see the abolishment of animal displays at the park but wanted animal welfare improved to 'acceptable' standards (with the goal of interviewing four people in each group). My rationale was thus to engage in a non-probability sampling strategy with the intention of gaining more detailed knowledge and insight into a particular group of individuals rather than to be concerned with generalizing findings to the larger population (typically seen in quantitative rather than qualitative research) (Esterberg, 2002). More specifically, my sampling procedure used both *purposive criterion* as I deliberately chose participants who met specific criteria (i.e. who had relevant opinions and/or experiences in this case), and *quota* since I chose a specific number of participants as representative for each category (Esterberg, 2002; Patton, 1987).

Since the *Toronto Star* exposé in 2012 brought unprecedented interest to this issue and significant backlash to the park in the form of activism in this region, this research was an opportunity to hear from activists fighting for animals on the ground and to interrogate the rationality and effectiveness of their ideological inclinations. Since the undercover footage of animal abuse at Marineland caught the attention of animal lovers in the community, this development propelled idle people into passionate activists— protesting in the streets, petitioning change in the legislature, and educating their friends and family on Marineland animals' plight. While animal rights and/or liberation proponents typically embody "activist" as part of their identity and regularly engage in protest around a myriad of animal issues to achieve radical end-goals, it is rarer that "traditional animal welfarists" with more modest goals of animal protection have enough "fire in their belly" to become active protestors. Indeed, this was precisely why the post-*Toronto Star* anti-Marineland social movement, at least in the beginning, was a unique opportunity to study a wide spectrum of perspectives and goals on issues related to animal captivity. As with any social movement that lasts for a significant period of time though, things never remain static and evolution of ideas and goals is inevitable.

Following the initial outrage and discontent with the park as a result of the Marineland whistleblowers' disseminations which brought together hundreds of animal rightists and welfarists from all walks of life, the movement eventually progressed to adopt more radical anti-captivity stances that fit the ideological inclinations of one of the main organizing hubs: Marineland Animal Defense (M.A.D). That is, the goals of anti-captivity and animal liberation were clearly articulated to any of its followers, and thus to anyone who chose to participate in any of M.A.D's forthcoming demonstrations. As a result, while the movement was still large even after the hype from the investigative series settled, the membership started to reflect a more

uniform structure of those fighting for anti-captivity rather than just animal welfare, and eventually the traditional animal welfarists who solely advocate for improved conditions for Marineland started to dissipate from the activist movement.

I came to this realization that the movement was more homogenous than I previously anticipated when I started advertising my project to recruit participants. I made two posters calling for 1) animal welfare activists at Marineland, and 2) animal rights/liberation activists at Marineland that I planned to advertise on the M.A.D closed Facebook group consisting of roughly 1250 people, as well as the NAFa open Facebook group with roughly 590 members⁵⁰. Although I could have recruited potential participants from the demonstrations, advertising online was a more convenient avenue, as well as more easily attracting those interested in the research. It should also be noted here that I am aware that the language around welfare and rights as an *identity* is not something that is universally understood among all animal advocates, so I compounded potential confusion as to what characteristics I was looking for in my participants by asking some rhetorical questions in the advertisement. For example, in the welfare poster I asked "*Are you concerned about the poor conditions animals at Marineland are subjected to? Do you believe that animals displayed at Marineland deserve to be cared for better?*" in order to clarify what kind of people I was looking for to participate in this study. In an effort not to scare away potentially interested welfarists from the study by posting the call for right/liberation proponents before or simultaneously with the welfare poster, I decided to post the welfare advertisement first until the point in time that I felt I had enough potential interest and could recruit at least four participants through this means before putting up my other advertisement.

⁵⁰ While the original intent was to recruit members of M.A.D for this project, I realized that the anti-Marineland movement consists of several other animal activists that, for personal or philosophical differences, do not consider themselves M.A.D members. For that reason, I wanted to be more inclusive and give equal opportunity to other animal advocates in the region to participate in the study, hence advertising to the NAFa group as well.

After a few days, I received immediate interest from four individuals and set up interviews with them. While I was thrilled that my project drew swift interest, I was however a bit surprised to find that after completing my interviews with these individuals that they were not animal welfarists, but either right and/or liberation and/or anti-captivity proponents. I can only speculate that as soon as my advertisement went up, people who saw 'Marineland' in the research title either did not look carefully at the criteria for participation (for this welfare section at least), or just decided to look past it so they could secure participation in the study, and ensure their opinions on Marineland be heard.

I soon after came to a realization that perhaps should have occurred to me earlier on; that if I was going to advertise a research project on Marineland activism to an online community of people a year and a half after the initial passionate hype, it is more likely that people who will respond are likely to hold full-scale animal rights or at least anti-captivity leanings since they are certainly committed to the (rightist and/or liberationist) struggle for the long-haul. In other words, if they sustain commitment to the cause, they likely also hold a commitment to the goals expressed by M.A.D and the more radical anti-Marineland movement in general⁵¹: that of anti-captivity. In terms of my project, this presented me with a dilemma. I now had to reconcile with the fact that my window of opportunity to interview a variety of *activists* in this struggle—which would allow me to extrapolate data that I could interpret and examine as an illustration of an important debate on animal welfare vs. rights and/or liberation in the entertainment sector—had passed. As opposed to completely overhauling my research objectives though, I instead tweaked the language in my research questions and objectives to look at animal *advocates* with rights and/or liberation and welfare orientations. Through this subtle change, I was still able to examine

⁵¹ The anti-Marineland movement contains members of NAFa, other animal advocacy groups from Southern Ontario and beyond, and independents.

the diverse perspectives and experiences of anti-captivity activists represented in the movement today (almost a year and a half after the initial controversy) as well as the opinions of non-active animal welfarists in the community who still express genuine concern for the treatment of Marineland animals.

Before my data collection, I asked myself how many interviews would be appropriate in order to produce valid research findings. Kvale (2006) suggests that there is no specific minimum number of interview subjects that a qualitative research ought to abide by, but rather to conduct as many as is necessary for the goals and aims of the project. Having already completed four interviews with anti-captivity proponents at Marineland, I started to see similar thematic trends emerge including staunch differences in points of view across activists with the same anti-captivity goals (to be discussed in the analysis section). Following Kvale's suggestion, while my original proposal for this project anticipated interviewing eight Marineland animal activists in total, I decided that narrowing the number of interviews to six Marineland animal advocates would be sufficient and more feasible within my funded period. Because online advertising through the M.A.D and NAfA Facebook groups was the most efficient means of participant recruitment for this particular topic, it was difficult for me to find alternative avenues to recruit Marineland welfare advocates. Through the help of friends and family though, I was able to generate interest 'through the grapevine' and snowball sampling⁵² produced two participants that would fit the characteristics of traditional animal welfare advocates; that is, those who maintain a strong concern for the welfare of Marineland animals yet accept captivity as legitimate, and who have been consistently "plugged into" the Marineland controversy in the news and through other sources. This was important to me as I was making reference to particular developments in the

⁵² Snowball sampling is a recruitment strategy that typically involves asking a key informant to the research to refer the researcher to other people that may fit the criteria of the project in order to secure an interview (Esterberg, 2002).

Marineland case in my interviews, and it was vital that my participants could speak meaningfully on the ensuing case rather than just hold vague opinions on animal captivity in general. While ideally I would have liked to recruit at least four welfare proponents to balance the four anti-captivity perspectives I gathered, restraints on time to finish this project within my funded period as well as greater difficulty finding these participants forced me to settle with two representatives of this ideological orientation. Given this limitation, I tried to give equal space for representation of Marineland anti-captivity and welfare responses in my analysis section.

5.4 Data Collection

My research in the field began Opening Day at Marineland, May 18th, 2013. Protestors gathered for a demonstration outside the entrance gates in what I facetiously refer to as a 'welcoming party' for this institution's opening season. That year there were five demonstrations coordinated by M.A.D from May 2013 to October 2013— four publicly advertised events (Opening Day Demo, International Empty the Tanks Demo, Labour Day Demo, and Closing Day Demo), and one surprise event (Stand Against Captivity Demo). I attended each demonstration that year paying particular attention to the tone of the protest, protestors' interactions with Marineland patrons and employees, and other notable actions or outcomes that organically transpired. At times I would jot down short field notes during the protest, but in an effort to remain attuned to my surroundings and not get too distracted, I would write more extensively about the experiences of the day immediately following each demonstration. As Esterberg (2002) suggests, ethnographic research is often supplemented with in-depth interviews of the individuals under study as a way to more comprehensively understand the nature of the case. Originally I intended on carrying out my interviews with activists during the course of the 2013 season while emotions were intense and their points of view were fine-tuned to the active struggles they were

currently embedded in. As it turned out though, I was not able to gather participants until the following January 2014. What I thought to be a slight setback actually turned out to be beneficial as my interviewees were able to reflect on the most significant events to them from the entire season as a whole, rather than only give commentary on the protests that they would have been a part of at the time of my interviews with them.

I conducted the first five of my interviews at Brock University in a booked private meeting room in the library, and at the request of my last participant, the final interview was conducted at her residence. There were five females and one male, all over age 18 and the interview length varied from 45 minutes to an hour and a half. Prior to the interview, participants who responded to my advertisements and who were suggested through snowball sampling by my family and peers were also given a formal letter of invitation to the study that discussed the premise and goals of the research in more detail. In addition, at the time of the interview, participants were each given an informed consent letter which reminded them of their rights as a participant (Kvale, 2006). As a small honorarium for the information they were providing me with, participants were each given a \$20 gift card to Rise Above restaurant as well as \$5 compensation for parking fees.

In accordance with the guidelines of semi-structured interviews, I developed two interview guides⁵³ for both anti-captivity proponents and welfare proponents, each containing both general and specific questions as a way to facilitate a more natural conversation while I also remained committed to staying on topic (Esterberg, 2002). It was important to me that the interview flowed and that I was not preoccupied with rigidity and checking off answers to

⁵³ While there was a lot of overlapping questions between these two classified groups, some questions were catered for that particular group. In particular, language differed in regards to "activism" versus "advocacy" between anti-captivity proponents and welfarists, as well as how welfarists responded to critiques by anti-captivity proponents on the strategies they chose to employ.

questions in a mechanical way. At times, our conversations meant that I had to improvise questions that reflected the course of the interview, or had to rearrange the order of my questions. While sometimes unpredictable, it was actually preferable and made for more interesting discussions while also enhancing my interpersonal interview skills.

It was also very important to me that trust and rapport be established with my participants early on. Since interviews are inherently steeped with power dynamics (whereby hierarchy between interviewer and interviewee is omnipresent and the interviewer has the final say in interpretation and dissemination no matter how democratic it may be otherwise) (Kvale, 2006), I was always aware of my responsibility to be as fair, friendly, and respectful as possible (through my tone and body language), even at the times that I may have personally disagreed with the perspectives of some of my participants on certain topics.

Related to this, I was initially concerned that my participants might ask me my ideological leanings and opinions on the controversial topics that arose which could have swayed the responses they gave and produce skewed data. In an effort to mitigate that possibility, I was prepared to debrief my participants on my personal stance as an animal rights activist, but not provide detail as to why I believed what I did. I was only going to release this information if any of them asked me at the beginning of the interview because I did not want to deceive them; however, as it turned out this concern that I had prepared for did not present itself. As each interview proceeded, in times where it was appropriate or necessary to do so, I engaged in follow-up questioning, interjected for clarification or when they were struggling to finish a thought, and transitioned from one topic to another when subtle cues suggested it was alright to do so.

The interview process was a rewarding experience for me. Having an opportunity to engage in a discussion on a topic I am passionate about with likeminded animal advocates, and query them on the roots of their ideological perspectives as well as their experiences in this movement was beneficial for me— not only as a social researcher, but as a fellow community animal advocate seeking to improve the lives of Marineland's animals. Before proceeding to my research findings, below I outline some final methodological considerations to produce a trustworthy study.

5.5 Ensuring Trustworthiness

As a challenge to the notion put forth by positivists that qualitative research is somehow limited in its capacity to produce trustworthy findings and conclusions, Shenton (2004) outlines some actions qualitative researchers can employ to mitigate this concern. Here, I situate my own research within some of Shenton's methodological considerations to demonstrate the steps I have taken to ensure this research produced trustworthy findings.

A study that has internal validity or *credibility* guarantees that the methodologies in the study accurately measure what they are supposed to measure (Shenton, 2004). In the context that it was conducted, credibility establishes the “truth value” of the findings (Guba, 1981, p. 79). In my research, I made use of triangulation through two different kinds of methods (participant observation and in-depth semi-structured interviews) to help verify the findings as representative of reality rather than potentially be seen as a ‘fluke’ (Guba, 1981). Further, and as previously stated, my social location as an anti-Marineland activist gave me insider perspective who could credibly analyse the nature of the issues because of my deep familiarity. Moreover, being a white female, occupying a relatively middle-class position also situates me as possessing certain privileges that enable the ease with which I could recruit participants and conduct this research.

Finally, research *confirmability*—or the extent to which the findings are representative of the participants' outlooks rather than a biased interpretation that fits my convictions (Shenton, 2004)—was something I was cognizant of. Precautions I took during the interviews to assure honest responses from my participants including developing rapport, giving informed consent, and promising anonymity of responses through the use of pseudonyms, as well as 'member-checking' my results with them after interviews were complete (by offering the interview participants a chance to review our research transcripts to ensure accuracy of their claims) helped to strengthen both the credibility and confirmability of my findings. To the extent that I could reasonably manage these considerations within the timeframe established for a Master's project, these methodological provisions enhanced the quality assurance of this study.

5.6 Theoretical Framework and Analytic Method

My central theoretical schema that informs the structure and overall framework of this project is a Critical Animal Studies (CAS) approach. The Institute for Critical Animal Studies (2014) states a variety of theoretical approaches that underscore the foundation of CAS scholarship; this includes (but is not limited to) postmodern, feminist, and/or anti-capitalist perspectives, and within it, approaches like critical theory, radical politics, social movements analysis and welfare versus abolition figure prominently. I highlight these models and areas of interest within CAS in particular as they constitute important frameworks for how I read and analyze my own data and informing literatures. My emphasis on unpacking⁵⁴ critical linguistic nuances within what is often simply referred to as the 'welfare versus abolition debate' highlights

⁵⁴ Referring both to my analysis of my own research data from interviews as well as my analysis of the informing literatures.

the poststructuralist⁵⁵ angle of this project—one that I argue is necessary in order to better understand the implications that arise from different types of animal advocacy, especially when language in terms of 'welfare' and 'rights' can be misused by its proponents and misunderstood by its listeners.

In terms of conducting interviews, I fore-grounded a feminist methodological approach by remaining aware of the inherent power dynamics within the interview setting, and paying particular attention to amplify the perspectives and experiences of those that are often sidelined in mainstream society. This is accomplished by actively listening to the participants' points of view, clarifying points when unsure, offering them the opportunity to review and revise the transcripts of our conversation, and overall recognizing them as co-constructors of knowledge that this thesis disseminates. Finally, as an overall framework, this project is certainly motivated by strong anti-capitalist critiques, in particular how animals used in the entertainment sphere are an integral component of maintaining what Barbara Noske calls the "global animal-industrial complex"⁵⁶ (Sorenson, 2014, p. xii). As such, my data analysis on how animal advocates translate their own personal ideological inclinations into certain calls for action, the backlash felt by social movements, and the conclusions I draw for appropriate pathways forward are framed within my own outlook guided by radical politics, in particular anti-capitalism and anarchism.

Analytically, I reviewed my interview transcripts and field notes comprehensively and with precision. Since I felt my interviews in particular produced a lot of rich data, I felt both excited and intimidated at the prospect of analyzing them. The approach I took was one that I

⁵⁵ Poststructuralism refers to a doctrine of thought that rejects traditional, structuralist understandings of humanity characterized by objectivity and universality. Instead, poststructuralism emphasizes diversity and plurality in conceptions of thought and reason with a particular emphasis in unpacking the nuances in language and the connotations they carry in reproducing knowledge (Best & Kellner, 1991).

⁵⁶ Drawing parallels to the structure of a global 'military industrial complex', Noske's "animal-industrial complex" refers to the pervasiveness of globalized animal commodification maintained by an interconnected structure of corporations and government bodies which materially benefit from animal exploitation (Sorenson, 2014, p. xxi).

developed in order to account for both broad themes and more specific nuances that emerged from my data. First, after I conducted each interview, I immediately transcribed them while the ideas and tone relayed by my participant was still fresh in my mind. By doing this, I was able to enhance my memory recall of the overall takeaway message (even weeks after the interview had taken place) by immediately re-listening to the conversation and reflecting on my notes that highlighted subtle cues in body language and voice tone. This strategy was especially helpful since my interviews sporadically took place over three months, and I felt it was important to be able to reflect on the similarities and/or differences between participants' answers.

When it came time to proceed with my data analysis, I first re-read each interview transcript as a general de-briefing of the conversation. Then, I looked over my central research questions guiding this project, as well as my interview guiding questions to get a sense of the particular themes I was eliciting from my participants' responses in order to answer said questions. Soon after, emergent categories and broad themes became apparent, and I charted these as a general map for my initial findings. I then re-read the transcripts, this time noting key words and phrases as 'codes'⁵⁷ that emerged repeatedly and across participants' responses in the page's margins. With broad categories and more specific codes established, I looked to my first participant's responses to see how to fit them within the framework without overwhelming myself with content across all six participants. While doing this though, I implicitly engaged in a consistent comparison of other participants' responses to this 'model' participant, and started to chart these under the umbrella headings as it naturally occurred. From this, I formed five general themes (each containing a variety of subthemes) which corresponded to answering my four

⁵⁷ Codes are a way of making sense of large amounts of qualitative data as a way to organize them around themes for interpreting in analysis.

research questions that each contained their own heading⁵⁸. Also, in an effort to be thorough and to ensure that I did not miss any important details from the first round of analysis, I went back and listened to the audio recordings of the interviews again and noted key topics, codes, and phrases that I may have missed the first time, and slotted them into the five broad themes (making new subheadings if necessary). Finally, once the key themes were established, I looked at my field notes from the demonstrations and noted where my participants made reference to key events that took place, as well as other contextual details from the demonstrations that supplement the data that came from my participants.

Recognizing a key set of codes that aided in deconstructing the welfare versus rights and/or liberation debate in animal advocacy social movements was integral to my methodological analysis. Since one of the main goals of this project is to reach more informed conclusions on how this theoretical debate plays out in on-the-ground activism in the entertainment sphere, the codes that I drew out of the data were an attempt to see how participants' responses aligned with or derailed from the theoretical frameworks already established in the literature. Thus, the conclusions I draw in this project from these research findings are an *extension* of conversations and theories already taking place in the realm of animal advocacy and social movement strategies,— not the emergence of completely new insights and theories as would be taken in a *grounded theory* approach (see: Charmaz, 2006). In the next chapter, I lay out the key findings that emerged from this study accompanied by a critical data analysis in light of what has already been articulated in other informing literatures.

⁵⁸ Of course, there was overlap across themes, and some themes answered multiple research questions.

Chapter Six: Findings and Analysis

6.1 Introduction

This chapter is organized around five central themes that emerged from the research findings: (I) Animal Welfare and Animal Rights: Perspectives on Anti-Captivity; (II) Different Types of Captivity: The 'Good', the Bad, and the Ugly; (III) Reformism, Radicalism, and Militancy; (IV) Social Movements: Diversity, Alliances, and Tensions; and (V) The Bigger Picture: Corporate Repression and Anti-Capitalism. Each theme draws attention to some of the key topics and points of discussion relayed by participants, even as their responses were at times contentious and contradictory. As I showcase below, the participants' perspectives varied considerably on any given topic, and I have attempted to organize each theme by deliberately drawing attention to the contrasting nature. I did this for a couple of reasons. First, after analyzing the data it became apparent early on that there were very diverse opinions not only between those I categorically demarcate as "welfarists" and "rightists", but also *within* each group. Paying particular attention to these differences in perspectives in ideological outlook and strategy between and among each group highlights each person's individual character, drawing attention to the necessity of not lumping together people under one simplistic or stereotypic label which may not be representative of their viewpoints. Further, the contrasting perspectives I highlight are not only seen between participants, but also, at times, seen in a particular participant's own train of thought,— that which was clearly confused and contradictory to what he/she at least initially appeared to be advocating for. Each theme represents a chapter subheading that corresponds to answering my four research questions that I outline in chapter three. Of course, there was some overlap in themes across the data, which may lead to some repetition in particular areas of analysis.

The themes of 'animal welfare and animal rights' and 'different types of captivity' correspond to answering research question one, and constitute a large proportion of the forthcoming analysis. The third theme on 'reformism, radicalism, and militancy' speaks to actions, strategies and theoretical and practical implications outlined in research question two—a significant point of investigation for this project. Research question three on tensions among advocates is tackled by discussions in the fourth theme on 'social movements and diversity'. Finally, research question four attempts to situate the discussion on the anti-Marineland social movement into the realm of a more comprehensive critique seen in theme five on 'the bigger picture'; this broadens the scope of analysis to look at corporate attempts to silence dissent and how this ought to translate into a larger critique of capitalism by animal advocates at Marineland and beyond. For ease of reference, I introduce each themed section with the corresponding research question it attempts to answer. Finally, not all themes were addressed by each participant, and therefore, some sections draw more extensively on particular participants' responses.

6.2 Animal Welfare and Animal Rights: Perspectives on Anti-Captivity and Moral Contradictions

Research Question 1: "Where are Marineland animal advocates ideologically situated in the animal welfare-liberation spectrum, and what factors have influenced their beliefs on captivity?"

I carried some assumptions into these interviews. Just as I had assumed I could easily find research participants who fit the binary criteria I had interpreted as all-encompassing in the anti-Marineland struggle (i.e. animal rightists and/or liberationists versus traditional welfarists), I also assumed that when I did find these participants that their responses would be demonstrative of this stereotypical theoretical binary. This was naïve. Soon after the interviews commenced, the complexity of the debate became very apparent across a wide range of topics, especially in

regards to their perspectives on anti-captivity. Initially, and without much thought, I associated sentiments of anti-captivity solely with those who explicitly identify as animal rights and/or liberation activists or who at least recognize the importance of fighting for animal rights and/or liberation as a worthwhile goal. I did not anticipate seeing these attitudes expressed by people outside of this camp; in fact, all six of my participants (even those with stronger welfarist inclinations) expressed some level of disapproval for the captivity of animals in the entertainment sector (at least in certain instances). Here I examine the context in which each participant's perspectives on anti-captivity have formed, how this situates them on the welfare-liberation ideological spectrum, and to what extent these perspectives are morally consistent with their views on the status of animals more generally.

My first two participants, Jay and Rob, embodied the characteristics that I envisioned as anti-captivity. Both vegans and seasoned activists in their community, their outlooks on the captivity of animals for entertainment seemed to stem from a thoughtful and comprehensive consideration of how this sector constitutes one branch of the problematic and ubiquitous nature of animal exploitation and suffering on a more grand scale. For Jay, this realization came from entering Brock University's Critical Animal Studies program which more thoroughly shaped her love for *all* animals, rather than just the stereotypical companion animals who we are socially conditioned to see as morally-relevant (such as cats and dogs). More specifically, her views have been strongly influenced by the abolitionist school of thought detailed by the influential animal rights theorist Gary Francione. She recalls:

...In that course [Animals and the Law], we had a reading by Gary Francione, and he has always really interested me, and now I follow him on Facebook and I love the posts that he writes, and he's all about like nonviolence, education, and raising awareness about veganism which kind of in his beliefs, and I agree, encompasses all of the animal rights ideas. Just promoting nonviolence, it's inherent you wouldn't use animals to, you know, entertain you or make money, so...

This pronouncement was a very telling indicator of Jay's ideological stance. As discussed earlier, Francione's Abolitionist Approach is widely-recognized as a radical and provocative argument in favor of the rights of animals, and as our conversation progressed, it was apparent that Jay's views consistently paralleled Francione's argumentation— both in the theoretical underpinnings, and in regards to the actions animal activists ought to take (to be discussed later on). I probed her further on this point by asking her if she saw any particular issue or sector of animal abuse as especially worth fighting for. Her answer reinforced her radical suppositions:

Um, just the use of animals in general I'm against and obviously I believe that animals don't belong in captivity, unless it's like a sanctuary or like a rehabilitative duty that you're performing on animals that say have been abused or neglected, or come from captivity and they can't live in the wild...So, I'm just opposed to the use of animals in general.

Later she adds,

It's all equal to me. I mean, 'cause I think about how animals in food is so normalized, but then when you see what happens it's so brutal and awful, and then it's like, but how is that brutality different than animals in labs, you know what I mean? So to me it's kind of the same thing.. I don't think there's appropriate degrees of violence or torture or anything like that.

As evidenced by her answer, Jay's recognition of the problematic nature of animal captivity for entertainment purposes is part and parcel of a broader critique on the use of animals across all sectors— each bearing their own formula for "brutality" that should not be ranked as one worse than the other.

Jay's outlook differed from that of Rob who conversely saw factory farming as the worst form of institutionalized animal abuse, given its sheer numbers and blatant cruelty. After being introduced to the idea of animal rights through watching some undercover video footage on food industry practices (in particular, "Meet Your Meat" released by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals [PETA]), he became compelled to change his lifestyle. For him, the only way he felt he could personally fight this industry was through his own adoption of a vegan diet and vegan

advocacy. It appeared then that his activism against the entertainment sector, and Marineland in particular, was not only a logical extension of his own animal rights outlooks and vegan lifestyle, but was an opportunity that presented itself thanks to the efforts of local grassroots groups who organized demonstrations against the park. When I asked him how long he had been active, he responded:

Probably about five years. Before there wasn't really an outlet, I didn't see any kind of outlets at first, I just thought that by not eating animals I thought that was enough, and then it kind of nags on you that it doesn't really change things for the animals, it just changes your own life. So I started I guess it would be with Marineland Animal Defense, when I noticed they were doing protests I thought 'great, there's already something going on', instead of just going out there by myself which can be kind of scary.

As vegans, Jay and Rob recognize that anti-captivity perspectives do not exist in a vacuum; rather, they are inherently informed by a more comprehensive critique on the "animal industrial complex" (Noske as cited in Sorenson, 2014, p. xii) As such, their views are constitutive of a morally-consistent ideological positioning that sees the issue of captivity as one problem amongst many as a result of pervasive speciesism and anthropocentrism (see: DeGrazia, 2002; Francione, 2000; Joy, 2010; Nibert, 2002; Regan, 2004; Singer, 1975; Sorenson, 2010; Torres, 2007). Nevertheless, sentiments of animal rights and anti-captivity are not only held by those who practice vegan ideals.

Josephine, a vegetarian, similarly became drawn to the notion of animal rights after harboring a strong discomfort with the way animals are treated in factory farms coupled with an emotional attachment to her rescued dog. Like Rob, she was motivated towards putting her animal rights views into practice, and anti-captivity protests at Marineland following the *Toronto Star* exposé became that outlet. Comparatively, for Jane rather, a predisposed and deep-seated vexation against the captivity of animals in entertainment has been central in her fostering an animal welfare ethic. She expressed to me her discomfort with cages:

Well, I always, always, all my life have been disturbed by seeing something, anything in a cage. It just rubs me the wrong way, and I just...it makes me go fetal. I can't look at them. I want to help them. I want them out of the cage.

Jane represents the cornerstone of ambiguities I have grappled with in terms of understanding Marineland animal advocates' ideological stances. Originally, Jane responded to my research project advertisement calling for Marineland animal *welfare* activists, but as evidenced in her response above, her anti-captivity leanings were apparent early on in our conversation. However, when I asked her about more specific markers of her identity in terms of animals, some obvious moral contradictions emerged:

Jane: Yeah..I like to use "voice for those without a voice". Um...I care for my fellow beings, be they furry or not, furry or scaley. [pause]...I eat meat...but I don't like what happens to our meat before we...I try to use ethical sources for my meat, and I don't eat probably as much meat as other people do because I like to...be more respectful of it. Does that make sense? It should be something special and...I think when we kill the pig we should cry [smiles, laughter]. . . . There should be some kind of respect for any type of life, and if you're going to take something's life. . . . I think you should treat it like it's at the spa. Other than that, I don't think we should be eating meat, I don't think we should be doing what we're doing to those animals.

Liz: Yeah, so but the entertainment thing, animals in entertainment is really like, for you like..

Jane: It's disgusting! It's disgusting.

Liz: For you, it's like out there as *really* problematic?

Jane: Yes, people are there to entertain us. Like, you can make a choice to become a dancer, or whatever you want to be, that's fine, that's great. . . But for something to be taken from its home, and thrown into a cage, and beaten into submission so that we can giggle and clap our hands, makes me want to vomit.

Jane's argumentation speaks to a somewhat contradictory moral divide. While her disapproval of the captivity of animals for reasons she deems frivolous (i.e. entertainment) is apparent and undoubtedly genuine, it is concerning that she does not similarly recognize how the consumption of animals for food similarly involves, to use her own words, "taking them from their homes,

throwing them into a cage, and beating them into submission". Unlike Jay and Rob, Jane's moral condemnation on keeping animals captive is limited in scope to one particular sector, thus situating her within an uneven middle-ground in terms of ideological positioning— animal rights-oriented in terms of animal captivity in entertainment, and traditional animal welfare-oriented in terms of eating animals. Jane's views then clearly demonstrate how explicit sentiments of anti-captivity can exist independently of a more inclusive critique of animal use embodied by an animal rights and/or liberation outlook.

Kristen and Joanne on the other hand, were more forthcoming about their traditional welfare perspectives. While both exclaimed that they "loved animals" and considered themselves "animal people", they both seemed to express a level of acceptance to the notion that animal *use* does not inherently represent moral quandaries. Rather, the problems arise when the suffering inflicted is explicitly cruel and deliberate. For instance, after she strongly condemned physical abuse to animals, and institutions like puppy mills, I asked Joanne what issues she has with Marineland:

I always... I used to bring my niece and nephew to Marineland because you know, we all like animals. Now the only thing I have with Marineland is I like an animal to be in their natural habitat. Now whales going around in a circle. . . . that's not natural. . . that's not right.

At face value, Joanne's language about how animals should belong in their "natural habitat" seemed to suggest that she, like the other participants, held anti-captivity leanings. However, when I probed further on her thoughts on Marineland as an institution, she clarified:

I don't mind it [Marineland], but there are certain things I don't like. That's not normal for an animal to be like that [in a tank]. Or like the beluga whales or whatever. That's not normal to be going in a circle. Like they have no room to swim. Like maybe that part can be taken out. You [Marineland] can have the animals, but they have to have room!

This passage is critical to Joanne's perspectives on captivity (something that will be discussed more fully in the next section on 'good' versus bad captivity). While she does not disapprove of the idea of captive animal institutions (such as Marineland) in general, she appears to be battling an internal dilemma in regards to the amount of space marine animals need in order for their welfare to be satisfied. As our conversation later suggests, her insistence that animals should be in their *natural habitat* does not apply to terrestrial animals in zoos, but rather to marine animals who live in tanks and swim in endless circles. As such, her broad outlook on the status of animals seems to echo a traditional welfare point of view overall, even as she expresses some hesitation about the idea of marine mammal captivity. Similarly, Kristen expressed sharp disapproval of marine mammal captive institutions after learning about the industry's cruel and insidious nature from the widely-acclaimed documentary *Blackfish*⁵⁹; nevertheless, this sentiment was oddly articulated alongside a strong adoration for terrestrial animal captive institutions, such as zoos, so long as education and conservation initiatives were (seemingly) prioritized. As a result, like Joanne, the problem is not necessarily captivity **in its entirety**, but certain problematic aspects of it. Throughout the interview, it was clear that Kristen's frame of reference on the 'acceptability' of certain captive animal settings over others was largely influenced by her own nostalgic memories of visiting the zoo as a child growing up, something she maintains shaped her appreciation for wild animals as an adult. As a result, Kristen drew on very particular criteria for permissible animal captivity, and morally inexcusable animal captivity (which I explore more in-depth in the next section). When I asked her about what sector of animal abuse she finds particularly pressing, she says:

⁵⁹ *Blackfish* is a 2013 documentary that explores the ethical issues of orca captivity, with a specific focus on SeaWorld in Orlando, Florida. It has achieved such mass success that many have attributed SeaWorld's declining profits and fading popularity as a result of the cultural phenomena of this film, calling it the "*Blackfish Effect*" (Tenofsky, 2013).

I've watched the documentary *Blackfish*...and I had it for like four months before I could muster the courage to watch it, because I knew it was going to infuriate me. It's a mistreatment thing. It's when you know there's suffering, like *legitimate* suffering, that's when I start to feel really uneasy about things, and that something needs to be done, something isn't right.

Her emphasis on captive institutions perpetuating some kind of deliberate or "legitimate" suffering as morally wrong which necessitates a remedy speaks to a strong concern for animal welfare (i.e. "humane" use), rather than an outright dismissal of captivity entirely like Jay or Rob would express. She goes on later to say though that breeding animals for captivity for entertainment purposes is not something we should socially perpetuate in the future. I asked her if this rationale applies to *all* animals in captivity. In contrast, she clarified:

For marine animals [emphasis], absolutely! I think you can provide a safe and happy existence for a zoo animal, like a mammal, whatever, turtle, whatever, you can provide that, and you're providing education...

Here, she seems to bracket certain aspects of captivity (specifically, the confinement of marine mammals⁶⁰ which she recognizes as possessing complex needs and social structures) as problematic, even as she seems to celebrate the supposed 'merits' of captivity in zoos for terrestrial animals for providing them with a "safe and happy existence". This latter presumption is troublesome as it represents a personal opinion with little factual basis, and as chapter four details, it sharply contrasts from expert opinions which demonstrate the multitudinous issues that animals in zoos experience (see: Acampora, 2010; Best, NDb; Jamieson, 2006; Jensen, 2007; Malamud, 1998). Certainly Kristen seems to express a passionate regard for the well-being of animals in captivity. Overall though, her responses tend to indicate an overarching stance which regards animals' *well-being* as advanced by "responsible" human stewardship and *use* of animals (i.e. traditional welfare) excluding her anti-captivity rationale for a specific set of species (much

⁶⁰ Although not explicitly expressed in this passage per se, throughout the interview Kristen emphasizes the confinement of marine mammals, rather than marine animals like certain types of fish, sharks, and so on, as morally problematic. More direct passages that illuminate this sentiment are expressed in other sections in chapter six.

like Joanne). The next section more thoroughly explores the participants' views on different types of captivity.

6.3 Different Types of Captivity: The 'Good', the Bad, and the Ugly

Research Question 1: "Where are Marineland animal advocates ideologically situated in the animal welfare-liberation spectrum, and what factors have influenced their beliefs on captivity?"

Before delving into a micro-level examination of the numerous issues that the case of Marineland presents, it was important to me to attempt to situate my participants' Marineland antagonism within a more comprehensive consideration of their opinions regarding the structure and practices of other similar institutions that imprison animals. Certainly, people's perspectives on Marineland do not emerge in isolation; rather, they are very much informed by their own prior conceptions on the (un)acceptability of the captivity industry *as a whole*. I argue that understanding the root of their ideological stance on captivity is integral to other related issues; it will certainly influence how they deal with ideological tensions between other advocates in the movement, and more importantly, what kinds of actions and strategies they engage in to help minimize animals' plight (at Marineland and possibly beyond).

In the previous section I broached my participants' perspectives on captivity as a precursor to this point; here, I explore their attitudes more in-depth by asking them where they would rank Marineland compared to other prominent local or international captive animal institutions (like the Toronto Zoo, Ripley's Aquarium, Safari Niagara, African Lion Safari, and SeaWorld). The purpose of this was to see more conclusively if their issues with Marineland were centered exclusively around its animal welfare violations, or perhaps something more encapsulating and inherent. For Jay, the answer was simple: captivity has no redeeming qualities,

only pitfalls. When I asked her where she would rank Marineland compared to other captive animal institutions, she boldly states:

I hate to, again, label it as degrees of good captivity, bad captivity. . . I don't want to say that just 'the tanks are small and that's bad'. Of course that's bad, but any sized tank would be bad. And you know, any enclosure for a bear or a lion is bad, no matter how big it is, it's not the same as you know, a forest or some African Sahara desert or whatever all the other animals live [in]. Nothing can compare to their natural habitat.

Clearly Jay's beliefs on captivity are staunch and unapologetic. This sentiment was likewise echoed by Rob, Jane, and Josephine; however, while Jay resisted the idea of ranking levels of cruelty since, for her, the crux of the problem lies essentially with captivity, all of the other participants pegged Marineland as particularly troublesome for its explicit animal welfare violations both within and outside⁶¹ of the park gates. Kristen recalls one negative memory:

It was depressing, like the most utterly depressing place I had ever been. . . while we were there, there was a seal swimming around in circles. It literally looked like it was about to die. There was something all around the side of its face, and it was swimming around with one fin in the air, paddling away, and there was nobody there! Like none of the trainers or anything were there to try and offer, you know, any kind of assistance to the animal. . . and this was the situation that made me say *'we're going home, right now'*. Like this [overall trip to Marineland] was depressing, but that was just disgusting! We were like *'what's wrong with it'*, and my husband was like *'you're getting really panicked'*, and I'm like *'Look at this animal! [emphasis] Like how can you not help it, there's something on the side of its face!'* It wasn't natural. . . I mean you just watch and you can tell. You can tell when a guy walking down the street is depressed. You can tell when someone isn't happy and they're [Marineland animals] not...there's like a look in their eyes, and you can tell that with the animals. There's no other way to describe it, other than there is just a depression you feel in the air.

Accounts such as this showcase an obvious problem endemic to this park. While some animal welfarists would singularly zero in on these telltale indicators of abuse that need to be fixed, I was surprised to see that Kristen and Joanne's discontent extended further. In my interviews with

⁶¹ In an effort to showcase how John Holer's disregard for animals extends beyond his business practices, Jane and Josephine both highlighted another distressing account of animal cruelty that garnered mass attention in the local press and community: when he allegedly shot and killed his neighbour's dogs, Blue and Thor (Diebel & Casey, 2013).

them both, key words like "space" and "room" were brought up several times in regards to the aquaria industry's severely inadequate environments for certain captives, specifically marine animals like orcas. As Joanne stated earlier though, she does not necessarily have an issue with Marineland existing as a business, so I asked her what its owner could do to improve it in order for her to deem it acceptable:

Well, they're going to have to get rid of their whales and stuff because that's not natural for them. It's not. They have the deer that are roaming around. Their bears there I think have lots of room. But I want them to be well-fed and well taken care of. Absolutely. But not...I don't like that thing with them [the whales] confined. Like when I went to the Dominican [Republic] last year, I went to the little Marineland thing [referring to the resort's 'swimming with dolphins' program], 'cause I wanted to be with the dolphins. I love the dolphins, they're adorable! Now they had so much *room* [emphasis] to swim. Like they can go under the docks, and it was attached to the ocean. So they weren't confined in one little area. They could come up to you, and they're not confined, as far as in a circle. So at least they had a little more room...

Here Joanne demonstrates a strong concern for the spatial requirements of marine animals that she maintains are not possible at a landlocked site like Marineland. I then sought to clarify her thoughts on whether space was an equal concern for terrestrial zoo animals. In contrast, she said:

Yeah, land animals [are] okay [to have in captivity], but marine animals is more difficult. . . to have their natural habitat. How can you? You need an ocean! You know what I mean? [laughter] They're huge animals!. . . I've been to African Lion Safari, but they're [the animals] roaming around! There's lots of room for them to roam around. I don't mind that too much. As long as they're in their natural habitat and they have space, I don't mind it. But I don't like them being caged or chained to something...I don't like that stuff. That I don't like at all.

To the same point, Kristen echoed these arguments:

It's interesting because it's very different for marine than it is for land animals, right, where we just stay out of the way. . . It's a size issue, right? It would be like telling me as a person that I had to live in my living room the rest of my life. . . you're putting an animal in a habitat the size of a fishbowl, right? And it's an animal that's meant to have the world to roam. Whereas the zoo doesn't have animals to that scale, like there isn't an ethical thing there, right? You go and you see the giraffes and the rhinos, and their enclosures are quite large. Like they've got space to run if they want to. But those poor whales, they can't even sprint,

right? [laughter] There's no stretching, and no option for them to do that. They're kind of living their life in a fishbowl.

Joanne and Kristen's responses present an interesting departure point for the notion of *space* as a determining factor in distinguishing 'good' from bad captivity. They both seem to overall regard the captivity of marine animals (at Marineland) as irresponsible and unethical in recognition of marine animals' sheer size that could never be accommodated in a tank equivalent to the size of a "fishbowl". (Oddly though, Joanne also seems to advocate that keeping marine animals like dolphins in ocean-side captive pens [as seen in many 'swimming with dolphins' programs] is less problematic because of the appearance that they have more room to swim, which is highly contentious). As Warkentin (2009) argues, in contrast to its wild and free counterpart, a captive marine animal's *umwelt*⁶² is substantially different and contributes to a compromised perceptual experience because of the spatial limitations imposed on them. However, Joanne and Kristen's assertion that zoos housing wild terrestrial animals does not represent an ethical dilemma is misguided and unfortunate. Claiming that land animals have "lots of room to roam around" in zoos draws on a warped perception of space that does not truly reflect their lived experiences (see: Biscould, 2014; Laidlaw, 2014). It seems then that their criteria for attempting to rationalize 'good' from bad captivity is determined by their own personal and uninformed perceptions of adequate versus inadequate spatial parameters. This is troublesome as what one perceives as spacious from his/her own human standpoint may be in stark contrast to that of a wild animal (marine or terrestrial) who migrates hundreds of miles a day. Considering this, I would suggest that Joanne's discomfort with animals being *confined* may be more argumentatively consistent should it be more inclusive of this reality rather than to be solely concerned with animals confined to obvious chains.

⁶² Developed by biologist Jakob von Uexküll, *umwelt* refers to an organism's semiotic and lived experience that shapes their view of the world.

Further, Joanne's use of the term "natural" is peculiar. Even as she claims that keeping marine animals in tanks constitutes unnatural practices, she also claims that zoos housing land animals means that they have the privilege of roaming in their "natural habitat" (never mind that zoos that artificially mimic the landscape of the animals' native habitat certainly do not parallel or equate the size, structure, or function of their natural existence in the wild). Not only conclusively problematic, these arguments premised on questioning *natural* and *appropriate* parameters for space neglect a more fundamental critique on the legitimacy of captivity in entirety (based on imperialist and anthropocentric notions), and instead quibble on semantics. Nevertheless, in contrast to the other anti-captivity proponents, Kristen and Joanne also maintain that there are other redeeming characteristics possessed by certain zoos that should not be dismissed outright, and thereby justify certain captivity institutions as "good". For instance, throughout the interview Kristen placed a high importance on the role that captive animal institutions play in providing an educational experience for children and their families—something that she was disappointed to see Marineland lack:

...Like we went to Marineland two years ago, and we couldn't find a poster, what the specific species the animal was. Like we couldn't find any [information] anywhere. Like there was no trainer, or anything to be found. Whereas you go to a place like the Toronto Zoo where you literally trip over signs that are trying to teach about the animals, and where they came from, and how they live when they are in the wild...

Since Kristen seemed to simultaneously regard education as important even as she expressed harsh disapproval of the ethics of marine animal captivity, I asked her what her perspectives were on Ripley's Aquarium in Toronto that seemed to embody both. She says:

[Pause]. I thought it was interesting. It was smaller animals. There's no...I mean there's sharks, but they give the impression that the enclosure is very big when it's not. I felt like it was educational. There was interest...it piqued interest, and I thought the facility was a lot better, and everything was very transparent about how they cared for the animals, how they cleaned the tanks. And there was an

education component to it. So how did I feel about it? I don't know. Would I go back? Probably because my kids loved it. But how do I feel? [Pause]. I don't know. I don't know. I mean the smaller fish and things like that, I think that's very different than the larger ones like sharks. And I think it's very different when it's a mammal. I mean you watch the documentary *Blackfish* and you watch them [captors] stealing their [orca whales'] babies, and you're just sobbing and crying your eyes out [sobbing sounds].

Here Kristen seeks to rationalize the captivity of some marine animals so long as it is done seemingly responsibly even though it was apparent that she was morally conflicted. Her argumentation on whether or not to support places like Ripley's Aquarium or the Toronto Zoo draws upon her own personal rumination based on what she interprets as educational and how much her family enjoyed it rather than a more principled opposition expressed by other anti-captivity proponents. Jay, alternatively, maintains that the captivity of animals promotes a form of 'bad' education to children in that it not only teaches them that animals exist for our use, but it also shows captive animals' altered behaviours that are starkly different if seen in the wild (see: Best, NDb; Malamud, 1998; Zoocheck, 1998). Irrespective of the debate on the educational merits of captivity⁶³, Kristen and Joanne also cheerlead efforts assumed to be central to the motivations of zoos and aquariums: conservation of endangered species. They uphold the Toronto Zoo and the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium as institutions that demonstrate benevolent, "green" initiatives rather than a greedy profit-grab. For instance, Kristen states:

You know, when there's different situations, like for instance, my kind of opposition to it [Marineland] is that I don't think Marineland has any other purpose other than to raise money. It's a cash-cow. It's all for-profit. Whereas you go to something like the Toronto Zoo, and it's about education, it's about fostering that love for animals so that people care about the fact that habitats are depleting, and that these animals are becoming extinct. So I think when you see something like what's happening at zoos, like *proper* zoos it's about...you know, different

⁶³ For critical views on this point, see: Marino, L., Lilienfeld, S. O., Malamud, R., Nobis, N., & Broglio, R. (2010). Do zoos and aquariums promote attitude change in visitors? A critical evaluation of the American Zoo and Aquarium Study. *Society & Animals*, 18: 126-138.

programs, conservation. Whereas with a place like Marineland, it's just about making money for some guy [owner John Holer].

She goes on to say:

...I think conservation is an issue because we don't protect the oceans, we don't take care of them, so we have to teach people what's in them in order for them to want to care about the oceans. So it's a vicious cycle, like where do you start? . . . Conservation is important because we don't care about the oceans. We dump in them, there's garbage we throw in, we just don't care about it as a habitat for animals. We have to show people what's in it [in marine parks] in order to get them to care about why we should protect it. . . And I don't know if there is a right way. Like I don't pretend to know that I would know a better way to do it...

Here Kristen draws a marked distinction between the "cash-cow" and the "proper" zoos and aquariums which, for her, seems central in whether or not she deems captivity justified. While it is commendable that people like Kristen and Joanne consider the decimation of wild species (by poachers and other factors in wild habitat depletion) as a rationalization for zoos and aquariums, this is an assumption that contrasts remarkably from the facts: as Best (NDb) states ⁶⁴, only approximately two percent of endangered species are part of the zoo industry's conservation agenda. Rather, conservation initiatives are rarely a sole motivator for the zoo and aquaria captivity industry, and are more likely an attempt to detract criticism from their corporate interests at sustaining profits. Further, Kristen seems to regard the supposed conservation initiatives in zoos and aquariums as serving a dual function of fostering in patrons an ethic of care about the sanctity of the ocean and the life within it. However, this rationale illustrates a hypocrisy I discuss in chapter three, whereby advocacy for animals and fostering a love for them is supposedly manifested through patronizing institutions ironically intent on exploiting them. Nevertheless, Kristen seemed to acknowledge that her rationale for captivity is not without nuance nor subject to critique; she states that she positions herself as a realist in terms of dealing with the problems facing wild animals, and for her captivity represents a reformist solution even

⁶⁴ See chapter three for more arguments on the inadequacy of captivity in prioritizing conservation initiatives.

though she recognizes it might not be the *right* way, nor pretend know the *better* way to handle it. Her stance here on reformism demonstrates a precursor to a discussion on advocates' ideologies, strategies, and tactics regarding the reform versus revolution theme that I explore next.

6.4 Reformism, Radicalism, and Militancy

Research Question 2: "What kinds of actions and strategies stem from their ideological identities, and what are the theoretical and practical implications?"

As a researcher, looking at the practical strategies that emerge from Marineland animal advocates' particular outlooks offers an interesting illustration of how praxis plays out in animal-related social movements; more importantly though, as an activist in this struggle myself, this topic speaks to a deep-seated curiosity that I have held for quite some time and one that I have a personal stake in understanding better. Of course, as previous research findings likewise demonstrate, the participants' responses in terms of strategy illuminated numerous complexities on the issue, giving me more to consider and grapple with rather than providing me with clear-cut answers on how to move forward. This section unpacks a theme that was evident throughout all interviews and especially merits a discussion in the realm of animal advocacy: radicalism. While it was clear that some participants held radical inclinations in terms of ideological positioning, the extent to which this necessarily translated into personal engagement with radical tactics was debatable. Here I explore the nature of what constitutes radical beliefs and behaviors for my participants, and the desired and/or resultant outcomes from this avant-garde position. Furthermore, I seek to embed this discussion within a critical debate on its alternative counterpart, reformism, and the extent to which the implications resulting from each point of view are either favorable or counterproductive to the achievement of animal liberation at Marineland.

"Crazy, Tree-Hugging, Vegan Extremists"

After conducting my interviews, immediately apparent to me was each participant's acknowledgement of *identity politics* as central in order to understand the context under which their advocacy for animals took place as well as what actions they would take in the future. To varying degrees, they all acknowledged how their anti-Marineland views differed substantially from the status-quo, subsequently relegating them to the label of (any one of) "crazy", "radical", "tree-hugging", "vegan extremist" by the general public. Most participants seemed to accept that these (unwanted) labels would inevitably be applied to them as a result of holding these alternative views independent of any actions they may take (of course, engaging in certain types of direct action could certainly reinforce these damning labels). With this in mind, I was first curious to see how my participants perceived intentional acts of radicalism⁶⁵ in the fight for animal welfare or rights and/or liberation and whether or not they modeled their own advocacy at Marineland around these views. As expected, my two vegan participants Jay and Rob both expressed an admiration and respect for the radical efforts of the ALF who rescue animals from abuse while simultaneously making a political statement on the brutality of animal-based enterprises through the destruction of their property. This pro-radical sentiment was also surprisingly expressed by Kristen (whose overall views are more aligned with a traditional animal welfare point of view) who expressed passionate support for the actions⁶⁶ of the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society against international whalers and wildlife poachers (specifically the Japanese whaling fleet), after watching the popular television series *Whale Wars*.

⁶⁵ I use the term "radicalism" to mean any ideas or actions that animal advocates support or undertake that falls outside of what is deemed appropriate, acceptable, or politically-correct by the status quo. This could include things like nonviolent civil disobedience, any degree of law-breaking, property destruction, any type of direct action, and so on.

⁶⁶ The Sea Shepherd Conservation Society regularly engages in controversial direct action tactics in order to ensure the protection of marine life. Some of these tactics include: scuttling waling vessels in the harbor, ramming into whaling vessels at sea, and destroying drift nets at sea.

While they all recognized the merits of the radical ideological mandates held by such groups, Rob's views were particularly noteworthy as he expressed hesitation in unquestionably aligning his radical outlooks (consistent with his vegan lifestyle) with his engagement of radical tactics at Marineland. Like Josephine and Jane, Rob was concerned about minimizing scrutiny (by the general public and those moderately interested in the Marineland cause) to the animal rights and/or anti-captivity cause where at all possible that comes from an over-emphasis on radicalism. Rather, his approach was more pragmatic by seeking to, as he said, "meet people where they're at" by supporting a diversity of tactics (including a range of reformist and radical strategies) in an effort to not scare people off the cause entirely. Similarly Josephine was very conscious to "not push her views on people" since she could foresee the possible negative repercussions that radical views encompassing anti-captivity and animal rights inclinations would have on further reinforcing the movement as irrational and illegitimate.

Here we can see how these participants incorporate possible views on radicalism by others (such as the general public) as a key component on their (un)willingness to support and engage in radical tactics at Marineland (to be explored more in-depth below). This differed substantially from Jay who not only wholly embraced radicalism, but actively sought to agitate others out of their reformist mentalities. This passage illustrates her stance:

...I try to get other people out of their comfort zone by saying things I know will disturb people. Like I'll refer to a, if someone's eating a steak, I'll be like "*Oh I don't eat cows*" or "*Oh I don't eat animals*". . .it disturbs people, it takes people out of their comfort zone 'cause they're like "*No it's not it's beef, it's steak*", and I'll say "*No it's a cow*", so that's been my goal through this whole thing [anti-Marineland social movement] is to um, be more brave to say things that bother people. . .or kind of shake things up, just disturb kind of the status quo, or whatever.

Here it is clear that Jay welcomes controversy in her interactions with others. As discussions below will demonstrate, her praxis is certainly premised on her radical views rather than making

compromises to her beliefs in order to appease others who may resist radical ideas and actions. More importantly though, she sees direct confrontations with others who hold either welfarist or speciesist views of animals as pivotal in order for them to clearly understand their moral contradictions. For Rob and Josephine, however, efforts to 'get people on their side' would have to be approached more delicately by making ideological and practical compromises in their interactions with others so as not to further enable the alienating "crazy, radical, extremist" labeling they and other animal rights and/or liberation advocates have been branded with. With this in mind, I then asked my participants more specifically how they viewed the motivations and outcomes of some of the most noteworthy strategies undertaken by the anti-Marineland movement.

Radical Tactics: Forwards or Backwards?

On Marineland's Closing Day of their 2012 season, roughly eight hundred activists gathered outside of the park's gates for a peaceful protest following the hype prompted by the *Toronto Star's* Marineland media release. What started off as a movement contained within the invisible boundaries of public and private property soon became an unpredictable force as several activists spontaneously decided to slowly approach the entrance gates, eventually going past the turnstiles and stopping an in-progress dolphin show chanting "Shut it Down" repeatedly with passion and conviction. This organic uprising made local and international news headlines and swept across various social media networks, drawing attention to alternative forms of advocacy that operate outside of what is deemed acceptable by the status-quo. For instance, even though this act was applauded and deemed inspirational by those sympathetic to the anti-captivity message and in favor of direct action, mainstream dialogues were quick to categorize it as a guerilla-style, militant tactic deliberately employed by a small sect of radical insurgents.

When I asked Rob what he thought about its effectiveness and how it was generally received, his ambivalence on labeling it a success was apparent (even as he agreed with the intention behind it). Our dialogue showcases his position:

Rob: It's tricky because if you're like the ALF, and you go in and break into a lab and you liberate some beagles or monkeys or whatever, fur farm or something, and you take the animals and you can find a sanctuary for them, um, I personally, there's a lot of risk in doing that, so I don't do it myself, but I do commend anyone that's willing to break the law through civil disobedience. That's not really civil dis...[clarifying], but...

Liz: I know what you mean yeah,

Rob: If you think a certain law is unjust or immoral, and to take it into your own hands, I have respect for that. At Marineland I don't think it's the same because you can't just kind of break in and liberate whales and dolphins [denoting their sheer size, difficulty in transporting them, etc], right? . . . So it was more symbolic than anything that they [activists] shut down that [dolphin] show to me. . . I don't know how effective it was. I mean in the long-term it will be a part, a small piece of this history of trying to shut down Marineland for good. So it's documented, it's a part of it. But when you look at events like that, [people think] *'okay, so they shut down a dolphin show, and then they got kicked out, and then Marineland still kept [running]'*

In regards to how the public perceives radical events such as this, he goes on to say:

Rob: That's when I have an issue with it, this is why I try to meet people where they're at, because the public will just see people...not all the public, but generally this is what happens: people trespass and then they get labeled as the *'bad guys'* in the scenario: *'they trespassed, they shouldn't have been there, they shut down a dolphin show for children'*. That always happens. Anytime you get even close to like militant behavior, and I wouldn't even call that militant either— to me militant means like using violence, like *actual* violence...

Liz: Physical violence?

Rob: Yeah, not just destroying property, or trespassing, or something. So yeah, the public is always sort of given that same old story of *'protestors got out of hand, we [Marineland] would've listened to them if they didn't get out of hand'* [smiles, sarcastic tone]. They [Marineland] never [emphasis] intend on actually listening but then they say [emphasis] they were thinking about it afterwards. It's like that all the time. . . So I kind of flip-flop on that. I know it's important to stand up and say 'no' when you disagree, but...I do wonder, like the larger picture, like how it looks [to others].

Rob's perspectives here illuminate some important and thoughtful considerations around the implications resulting from rogue strategies such as this one. Although he commends the motivations behind acts of civil disobedience and those aimed at breaking unjust laws (likewise expressed by Jane), he also remains critically aware of the power that media narratives have in propagating an anti-radical sentiment among the general public propelled by these tactics that fall outside of "polite" and "lawful" society. Further, he explicitly questions the mainstream rationale of throwing around terms like "militancy" in discussions around animal advocacy; especially when the tactics are relatively tame compared to more violent actions carried out by other activists or "terrorists" in other political struggles. Thus, he draws attention to these rhetorical counter-tactics employed by those who fight against the goals of animal activists (like the mainstream media and Marineland stakeholders) in order to not only delegitimize the diversity of tactics in their activism, but to also delegitimize their animal advocacy message entirely. Similarly Jay seemed to recognize the possibility of negative labels being attached to animal activists because of radical actions; however, she did not seem to distinguish this action as being perceived by others as any more radical than the everyday actions of practicing a vegan lifestyle. When I asked her about her thoughts on how the public might see the 'storming the gates' tactic, she states:

Probably the same way people I know perceived it as, you know, radical in a negative way, not like how my dad uses the term radical, like *"yeah that was radical, awesome"* [laughter]. 'Cause when I think of radical I think *"yeah that's fucking awesome"*. But [in general] like uh, crazy, wild, negative, radical. I've read literature where animal rights activists are framed as terrorists, so that kind of stuff. But I think that it's the same way people perceive, you know, vegans or the way people perceive people, like any animal rights activists, no matter what they're doing. Even if I was just sitting here being like *"you know I don't eat animals, or use products that were used on animals"*, they would probably think I'm crazy and radical, and they can't possibly imagine why I would do that, it's probably the same feeling as they would've had about the video [of the activists going past the turnstiles and shutting down the dolphin show]. To me, I don't think

there's anything different about the two, because both are going to be framed in a negative way to maintain the status quo that those things are trying to disrupt.

Here Jay seems to equate all radical actions (whether refusing to eat animal products or trespassing onto Marineland property) as generating the same adverse response from those unwilling to consider the argument for veganism (including anti-captivity).

In contrast, Rob, Jane and Josephine maintain that certain types of activist tactics are more likely to elicit contempt from others who may simply straddle an unsure middle-ground in regards to their feelings on captivity, and thus should either be employed with caution or reconsidered entirely. For instance, another controversial strategy carried out by some members of M.A.D was 'home demonstrations' outside the residence of Marineland owner John Holer. Inspired by the efforts of S.H.A.C [Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty] activists who engaged in home demonstrations of vivisectionists employed by Huntingdon Life Sciences as a part of their "diversity of tactics" model, M.A.D's motivations to engage in home demonstrations were not only to '*name and shame*' Holer for his history of cruel conducts, but also to reclaim protest space which was taken away from them when the City of Niagara Falls granted Holer his request to privately lease areas of municipal property outside of Marineland. While organizers of S.H.A.C and M.A.D saw home demonstrations as a successful component of the diversity of tactics model, Rob had alternative views. I asked him what kinds of strategies he would get behind in future Marineland resistance. As he expressed earlier regarding the storming of the gates tactic, his answer here more thoroughly demonstrates his concerns around radicalism:

Um...the diversity of tactics is what makes it such a successful movement thus far, knowing when it is good to employ certain tactics, and when it is a horrible [emphasis] time to do it. Like when I saw that they [M.A.D] were doing home demos, I wasn't really comfortable doing that, as much as I think John Holer is incredibly cruel in the way that the animals are treated and the way he interacts with protestors when he's around. I don't know if I feel super comfortable going into just like a private neighbourhood because other people live right beside him

. . . I know the point is to kind of shame him...maybe that works, maybe deep down one day he'll say "*Ah man, they're [the protestors] right. I'm a bad guy. I should stop this*" [laughter]. . . Doing the demos [public demos] and advocating as often as possible telling people "*Hey you should watch this movie Blackfish or Earthlings*", or something like general animal rights stuff, I like to throw in. But I personally try to stay positive and sort of polite to everyone and save the more radical tactics for the times that they're kind of necessary, and there are times when they are necessary. But just certain times it's not...[pause]...it's hard to gauge. . . And then you're, yeah, the public perception becomes that of like ...they equate the issue being not important because you don't want to listen to the "radical activists". They [home demonstrations] make people uncomfortable, and that's kind of the point but...I don't know, I feel like people will just look for an excuse to remain apathetic anyway so...

Following this statement, he goes on to state his discomfort when activists decide to engage in other types of radical behavior including yelling damning remarks at Marineland patrons as they enter the park. This was a feeling also shared by Josephine who thought that shaming tactics would only alienate people and bring about negative publicity to the cause, likening it to the controversy surrounding the abortion debate. Interestingly, in Rob's statement above he seems to overall suggest that a diversity of tactics in the Marineland resistance movement helped propel its success, while at the same time he continually expresses a strong hesitancy about some of the most radical tactics the movement has employed. This discrepancy showcases the high level of concern he places on public perceptions of radicalism on whether or not the anti-Marineland movement will remain successful. Similarly, Jane and Josephine also stated to me that these kinds of radical tactics (what they called "militant"), were not only ineffective but would hurt the movement (e.g. Jane: "You can get militant, but it doesn't help. . .it doesn't make the protestors look good in the public eye"; Josephine: "Yeah I think they could hurt [the movement]").

Of course this debate is a highly contentious one as it asks people to confront and give their opinions on their willingness to engage in controversial strategies. So what are some of the other, more socially-accepted strategies that have been employed? The next section looks at a

specific type of legislative positioning that has become central in the current anti-Marineland struggle, and that also most acutely reflects the participants' ideological positioning in terms of praxis.

"Save Marineland's Animals" Petition: A Centrist Compromise?

So far we have seen how some activists perceive radical actions as presenting more obstacles to overcome than providing benefits in resolving this struggle. The question then becomes whether or not petitioning the provincial legislature for a new law regarding the protection of captive animals in zoos and aquariums could constitute a more feasible and desirable strategy? Soon after the *Toronto Star* Marineland exposé surfaced, former Marineland animal trainer Phil Demers drew public attention to the lack of animal protection laws for captives in Ontario by creating a petition directed to Premier Kathleen Wynne⁶⁷ and the Government of Ontario on change.org⁶⁸. In it he briefly describes the poor conditions for animals he witnessed at Marineland, and what he claims are "gross injustices" facing animals in zoos and aquariums in this province as a direct result of the "lack of animal protection laws" (Demers & Zoocheck Canada, 2012). Consequently he maintains that "without those laws *no one* [emphasis added] will be able to save the animals at Marineland" and therefore petitions his request⁶⁹:

I'm asking Premier Kathleen Wynne's Government to *pass a new law that will regulate a high standard of care* [emphasis added] for animals in aquariums and zoos, and will provide an opportunity to close places like Marineland *when they don't comply* [emphasis added]. During the past 20 years there have been many attempts to help the animals at Marineland, but these attempts have never turned into real Government action.

⁶⁷ The petition was originally directed to Premier Dalton McGuinty until his resignation from office in February 2013

⁶⁸ Change.org is a free online petition platform for a variety of global social causes.

⁶⁹ Demers' petition also includes a request for John Holer to allow him to visit Smooshi the Walrus who he claims is dependent on him for care. I did not include it within the text because it is not relevant in my discussions with my participants.

At the time of writing this thesis, the petition has garnered roughly 102 000 signatures and has been presented to MPP⁷⁰ Madeleine Meilleur for review. To this day Demers and petition supporters are still awaiting government action, and the petition is still seeking support from others.

When I first became aware of this petition, I was concerned. In my personal reading of it, I was particularly critical of Demers' language which seemed to limit its advocacy for goals centered around animals' welfare (not rights or liberation). I emphasize phrases above that I see as potentially generating some troublesome outcomes for captive animals in the long-term by actually halting the possibility of animal rights or liberation rather than moving closer to it. When Demers asks the Government to "pass a new law that will regulate a high standard of care for animals in zoos and aquariums", only requiring institutions like Marineland to close down "when they don't comply" to said 'standards of care', it necessarily implies that the problems facing captive animals are solely around welfare violations and not inherent cruelty encapsulated within captivity itself. As has been shown in chapter three, captive animal structures bear numerous ethical issues beyond poor welfare standards (including things like poor water quality, lack of veterinary care, and lack of stimulation that animals at Marineland face), and instituting an animal protection law as the long-awaited solution could sway public opinion into an acceptance of the existence of aquariums and zoos so long as the institutions respect the animal "protection" law in place. Furthermore, asking that places like Marineland be closed *only* "when they don't comply" to this law hinders the possibility for captive institutions to be shut down on other more principled grounds (such that they sustain and perpetuate the exploitation of animals). Rather, it reinforces the idea that people's critique of captive institutions ought to stem from a lack of adherence to regulated standards of care, consequently allowing institutions like

⁷⁰ Member of Provincial Parliament

Marineland to thrive so long as they respect the rule of law. Finally, his insistence that until said law be instituted "...*no one* will be able to save animals at Marineland" strongly undermines the work done by grassroots activists (at the park and in other social movements) that have organized and have achieved gains outside the realm of legislative politics.

I draw attention to the specifics of the language in this petition as I have found it to be problematic. I offer this critique based on a critical reading of the request and the possible negative implications that may result, and not as a judgment of or assumption about Demers' actual motivation or goals. However, because this petition has garnered a large support base, I thought it was important to get other animal advocates' perspectives on what implications they saw arising from it in order to not only sharpen my opinions on it, but also to allow others to critically reflect on the pros and/or cons of this more reformist strategy. When I read Jay what the petition was asking and whether or not she would sign it, she boldly stated she would not (drawing similar critiques as I did). I then asked her if she thought people who signed this petition thought through the possible implications. She states:

They probably think of the obvious implications that their...what I imagine their train of thought is "*this is a great petition because we're saving them from suffering*", to an extent they probably think "*we're saving them from suffering by making sure that there's better standards of care, that's great, I'm going to sign it*". What the consequences that they don't think of, is that it makes it okay to keep animals in captivity. That means that there's a certain level of exploitation that's acceptable to animals. So they probably don't think of those ramifications, but they're probably feeling really good about supporting that petition because they're like "*Yeah I love animals, and I think that they need to be treated really well and have this care, and if they're going to live at Marineland then they should have really good vets*", and stuff like that. And I mean from my other responses I think you can probably guess I don't agree with that. As soon as you read that [petition] I'm like "*I know I didn't sign that!*" [laughter]

Jay goes on to elaborate the context under which her unwillingness to support the petition formed. At a local community potluck event, she went to hear Demers speak about his experiences at Marineland and what he thought activists should do in the future. Her perceptions

of his general outlook confirmed what she deemed to be welfarist, and thus saw as inconsistent with her ideological beliefs for achieving animal rights and/or liberation.

Jay: Yeah he said "*it's [Marineland] a really terrible place, I saw some really bad things*". But you could tell he was like, "*we need better care [for the animals; emphasis], I tried to get them [animals] better care*". And I could resp...I understand that when he worked there he wanted the animals to have better care because he saw that right now this animal's sick, this animal needs care now. I get that. But I also got the sense that in general he'd be okay with..

Liz: Yeah, his goals are limited you say?

Jay: Yeah they're welfarist. They're welfarist. [As a trainer] he believes in using animals⁷¹.

As Jay's responses demonstrate, she appears unwilling to concede to strategic efforts (such as the petition) that she deems reformist and ultimately backwards in the progression of achieving animal rights or liberation. For her, any type of welfare tactic that aims at marginally improving the living conditions for animals in captivity ultimately serves to perpetuate the longevity of the captivity industry since the general public would inevitably learn to tolerate a "*certain level of exploitation that's acceptable [to treat] animals*". As our conversation goes on to suggest, she fears that this would be the outcome regardless of the motivation⁷² behind those advocating for welfare strategies. As a result, Jay expressed concern that this reformist strategy would be uncritically supported by not only the large portion of the anti-Marineland movement with traditional welfare leanings, but also those advocating anti-captivity via incrementalism. When I asked Jane and Josephine about their views on the petition's goals, their answers seemed to

⁷¹ Since the time of this writing, it is more clear that Demers' views have evolved surrounding the use of animals for entertainment purposes.

⁷² As has been previously stated, welfarism includes a wide range of ideologies and makes calls for different outcomes-- some advocating *traditional* views and the humane use of animals, and others more *pragmatic* or *incrementalist* views which seek the eventual rights and/or liberation of animals from different types of oppression.

confirm Jay's apprehension. For instance, Josephine, a resident of Buffalo, New York, pointed to the inadequacies of Canadian laws regarding animal welfare when I asked her about the petition:

I think it's a good thing to do, I definitely think it's a good thing to do. I just don't think that they [Marineland] would ever adhere to that [laughter]. But yes, I would love to see something like that passed, definitely. You definitely need laws, animal laws here in Canada.

Jane likewise saw a lack of legislation as significant problem. Our conversation highlights a point of view that contrasts from Jay's for achieving an anti-captivity end-goal:

Liz: So what are your thoughts on how this [petition] is worded? Do you think that's a good request to make?

Jane: Yeah, it's better than nothing. But I don't like...[pause]...I don't even want to see an animal putting on an act even if in others' opinion it's being treated fairly. I don't wanna see...that's not fair because that animal didn't come knocking on your door and say "*Can I have a job performing on your stage?*" Until that day happens, it's not good. And I believe that Phil is probably trying to get something other than nothing.

Liz: Mhm, and what do you think is the goal of the petition?

Jane: Well to try to get them [Marineland] to adhere to some rules. We need some rules for the animals! They need rules for the monsters to follow that are in charge of the prisoners, just like we have in human jails.

Liz: What kinds of rules should be implemented do you think?

Jane: Rules that there should be no animals in captivity! [Laughter] Ultimately that's the way I feel.

Liz: Do you think that incremental steps through going through legislation and ensuring better conditions...

Jane: Yes..

Liz: ...is a good first step...

Jane: Yes...

Liz: ...in order to eventually get them [animals] out?

Jane: Yes.

Liz: Okay.

Jane: Because with that legislation in place you can go in and 100% say *"This is not meeting the requirements. He's [John Holer] out"*. Whereas [now] there are no requirements. We don't have any rules right now. . .

Jane's rationale points to an interesting contradiction. While she maintains that rules should be in place that prohibit the imprisonment of animals for entertainment purposes, she also seems adamant that there ought to be rules in place in captive animal institutions that would meet some kind of arbitrary "requirements" for prioritizing a standard of care for animals. For those with more abolitionist leanings like Jay, these views represent mutually exclusive interests that correspond to very different outcomes,— the former facilitating the dissolution of the captivity industry in entirety, and the latter enabling its perpetual continuance. Nevertheless, while Jane is vehemently anti-captivity, she sees the petition as a positive step forward in that the enactment of such an animal protection law would, at the very least, close places (like Marineland) which harbor the most grossly offensive conditions for animals. Occupying some sort of middle-ground between these views, Rob shares his perspectives on the petition:

Rob: It's good and it's bad 'cause...it's good because if it does what it's actually intended to do, it's good for the animals that are currently captive, and if it can shut down Marineland for not complying, then that's good because then those animals, you know, there'll be one less place that exploits animals. They might send off whatever animals they have, I don't imagine they would send them to a sanctuary, they would probably send them to other parks, but then at least Marineland would no longer be continuing that process. So I can see the good side of it. But again, that has like an expiration to it. Like [people might think] *'Okay, now we've achieved this goal, and now we don't have to worry about the animals anymore'* which I think is wrong. I think the animals aren't being taken into account after they [petition supporters] get these sort of very small...[pause]

Liz: Wins?

Rob: Sort of wins, when they aren't really wins for the animals because they're still being held captive, and they're...yeah. So I don't really know whether I'd sign that petition. I don't see it as being overly-harmful to do so, but at the same time I

think it merits a discussion about, like, at what point do you stop advocating for the animals while they're still in captivity?

It is evident here that Rob's opinions bridge two important considerations on the potential implications resulting from reformist strategies (such as this one) in animal advocacy. Certainly, there is merit to a recognition that because animals possess sentience, efforts to ensure their well-being *within our capabilities* in a system plagued by anthropocentrism, should be prioritized. In this case, the "Save Marineland's Animals" petition, which only requires the "armchair" support of sympathizers to animals' plight, could invariably result in the betterment of animals' lived experiences currently in captivity. At the same time, one ought to be mindful that undue support of such a reformist strategy without accompanying critical considerations could result in the continued exploitation of animals advanced by the masses of people who may continue to support zoos and aquariums under the guise that because welfare laws are in place, everything is now okay. Rob seems to acknowledge the importance of both sides of the debate resulting in an undecided stance on whether or not he would lend support to this strategy. Nevertheless, throughout the interview he maintained that he would compromise on his radical orientation by supporting incremental measures in animal advocacy when necessary if it could return favorable gains for animals in the moment. This was shown in his stance that he has and continues to commend efforts done by animal activists across a range of issues in improving welfare standards of care while simultaneously educating others about the importance of animal rights and/or liberation. To return to an earlier point he raises though, if the petition was successful in enacting a law to "protect" captive animals, *"at what point do you stop advocating for the animals while they're still in captivity?"* Joanne and Kristen's views illuminate this concern.

As demonstrated above regarding views on different types of captivity, Joanne stated that she did not mind the existence of certain types of captive animal institutions (particularly zoos)

so long as they fulfilled basic welfare requirements such as adequate space for the animals. Not surprisingly, her views on the petition were favorable, as she viewed its goals as compatible with her desire to ensure adequate care for animals in zoos and aquariums. When I read her Demers' request, she boldly remarked:

Oh absolutely!. . . Like if this guy [Holer] is really not taking care of the animals, they should close down until everything is right. . . it should close down [temporarily], people [experts] need to go in, see the situation, and fix all the problems! And then you [Marineland] can re-open it again if it's up to standards . . . Or take animals somewhere else so they can be taken care of.

Given that Joanne expressed a firm disapproval of the captivity of marine animals since what she saw as their unique space requirements would always be unfulfilled in captive structures, her statement here likely reflects an impassioned support for measures that would make things *right* for terrestrial animals. Similarly, since Kristen explicitly positioned herself as a "realist", she ardently maintains that zoos will always exist (regardless of the opposition they face by some more radical anti-captivity proponents) and sees reformist measures like this petition as a way to keep zoos standardized to what she feels are acceptable conditions. When I asked her what she would like to see happen at Marineland, she states:

Should it [Marineland] be closed down? Yes. Do I think that after it's been closed down and cleaned out somebody else could buy it and do something a lot better with that? I like the idea of having a facility that..like not marine animals, but. . . zoos will always be here, so I think that it's important that society keeps them honest and educates, and goes about it the right way. . . so you have to regulate and control it with laws and things like that.

Here Joanne and Kristen's views demonstrate a more unnerving possibility in the uphill battle against captivity resulting from reformist strategies. They both seem to believe that instituting animal protection standards invariably results in an outcome that is *right* and *just* whereby animals are "protected", and people can wipe their hands clean of responsibility in moving towards their liberation from these unnatural structures. One must then ask whether or not one

has considered the wide-ranging implications from a seemingly simple solution: "Save Marineland's Animals", yes or no?

Discussion on Strategies and Tactics

As this analysis has demonstrated, there remains a perpetual unrest in the debate regarding the pitfalls and benefits of radicalism and reformism. Here, I situate myself within these considerations, critically analyzing the potential implications arising from the moderate and more radical strategies outlined by my participants in previous sections.

At Marineland, there has been a wide range of strategies and tactics employed, each culminating in their own unique outcomes which have been differentially perceived by animal advocates. Jay's loyal commitment to an uncompromising radical framework has been illuminated not only in her unquestioning support of direct action tactics at Marineland, but also more importantly through her outright dismissal of reformist strategies aimed at incremental progress. In my view, Jay's praxis acutely resembles the "Abolitionist Approach" doctrine put forth by Gary Francione. As excerpts in chapter four detail, Francione (1996; 2010) makes no apologies for his hardened critique on incremental animal advocacy he deems "new welfarism". Like Francione, Jay asserts that supporting welfare-type tactics (including Demers' petition) tacitly sustains institutions premised on using animals as human property; as a result, she is only willing to advocate for "big steps" that help prompt people into a more ideologically-progressive pathway. The types of anti-Marineland tactics in sync with her beliefs include: supporting a law to end the "wild-capture loophole"⁷³, anti-captivity demonstrations, and continuing to advocate for Marineland to be either shut down or to become an amusement park without animal displays

⁷³ The wild-capture loophole refers to Canadian law that allows the international import and export of marine animals for captivity. M.A.D has and continues to pursue a moratorium on the wild capture of marine animals which enables captive institutions to thrive (since breeding programs regularly fail to produce animals robust enough to sustain captive conditions).

(with its current captive animals finding refuge in an animal sanctuary, or being re-introduced to the wild).

In principle I stand by Jay's views and credit her for raising some crucial points for consideration in terms of the nature of animal advocacy. Indeed, the concern I raised earlier regarding the possible negative implications resulting from reformist strategies like the "Save Marineland's Animals" petition was very much aligned with Jay's *'Francione-ist'* position.

Having said that, after having thoroughly analyzed other participants' responses within the scope of existing informing literatures on the broad debate of "welfare versus rights", my views have incorporated more nuanced interpretations and have become more murky as a result. In particular, Rob's responses gave me a lot to grapple with. First, the emphasis he placed on understanding the way radical tactics are perceived by the general public is worthy of consideration. While I likewise respect and support the work of direct action done by radical activists in animal rights and/or liberation struggles, I feel it is important to constantly be aware of the negative ways it could be framed to others (as a result of corporate propaganda likening it to acts of "terrorism"). If these types of tactics will be undertaken, activists ought to be prepared to dialogue with others on why these measures are necessary in disrupting a status-quo that has been corrupted within a destructive capitalist regime. In terms of how it is perceived by others, Jay sees practicing a vegan lifestyle and employing radical tactics at Marineland as equal. In contrast, I believe people are far less prepared to support direct action tactics which are arguably perceived as more threatening (including acts at breaking the law, or that come close to it) than to support an alternative vegan lifestyle which is premised on boycotting animal products.

Second, Rob's praxis is more fluid as he remains open to supporting a variety of strategies in the fight against Marineland, including incremental steps toward an end-goal of

ending captivity. Thus, his views similarly correspond to the "new welfarist" position abolitionists like Jay and Francione remain so critical of. Both Rob and Jay remain aware of the possible negative implications that may arise from welfare strategies one ought to be aware of though : as demonstrated by Jane, Josephine, Joanne, and Kristen, reformist strategies like the petition could generate some uncritical support which could (unintentionally) enable the continuation of animal imprisonment and suffering. However, I agree with Rob that some welfare strategies should not be completely *dismissed outright* based on some kind of perception that it strays from moral purity. Drawing on the critical insights of "new welfarists" like Ball, Jones and, Szybel, I agree that we as animal advocates should at least consider enacting small steps in favor of reducing significant degrees of harm facing animals (all the while recognizing that implementing such a strategy does not entail happiness for animals, and that more work needs to be done). Similarly, as Garner (2010) maintains, in terms of labour struggles among the working-class, I certainly would not outright dismiss the efforts by labour unions in bettering the conditions of proletariat workers just because I hold revolutionary goals of living in an anti-capitalist society. If certain reformist tactics in animal rights social movements are employed though, there **must always** be a deliberate effort to educate others about the necessity for the end-goal— in this case, anti-captivity. Throughout his remarks, I believe Rob's views encompass the critical complexities embedded in this contentious discussion, and offer important insights in terms of being open to the idea of "new welfarism". Having said that, given the rhetoric used in Demers' petition, I still maintain that the outcome of this petition in particular could be negative, but this is not a reason to negate the other positives that could arise from welfare strategies if implemented with thoughtfulness on the possible implications. In my concluding chapter, I more thoroughly situate my own views of reformist and radical tactics here into a more broad

perspective regarding welfare versus rights, as well as what I see as progressivism moving forward in anti-Marineland animal advocacy. In the next section though, I explore how these differences in tactics and strategies employed produce ideological tensions among advocates, and whether or not it is reasonable to suggest that alliances can be built in order to enact 'solutions'.

6.5 Social Movements: Diversity, Alliances, and Tensions

Research Question 3: "How do the different ideological orientations in animal advocacy create tensions among Marineland animal advocates, and how do they go about handling them?"

Thus far my attempts to illuminate animal advocates' numerous ideological disparities regarding their personal beliefs and strategies they employ have been satisfied even with my small sample of participants. If one were then to consider the vast network of people participating or supporting the anti-Marineland social movement as a whole (where it has even garnered international recognition and support), it is even more clear how overwhelming the number of ideological disparities are. Here I am concerned with how my participants navigate the terrain of anti-Marineland social movement advocacy in which complex, and at times competing interests (i.e. fighting for traditional animal welfare, incremental animal rights, or abolitionist animal rights and/or liberation) are operating. Because of its large scale, it is not surprising that one encounters such a diversity of opinions within what is perceived⁷⁴ as a unified social movement. I am thus interested in understanding what my participants see as appropriate ways to interact with others who hold different viewpoints, and whether or not they deem the ideological tensions too great to mend into alliances working towards a common goal.

⁷⁴ At least by the general public.

Conflict Avoidance

On a micro-level, some participants placed a high priority on ensuring smooth personal interactions with their ideological antagonists. As referenced earlier, Rob and Josephine seek to be non-confrontational in communicating their anti-captivity message, and thereby remain consistently cognizant of how they interact with others. For Rob this means not outwardly identifying himself as a "vegan" or an "abolitionist" so as not to immediately "*turn people off*" the cause. Similarly, Josephine tends to keep her anti-captivity and animal rights beliefs to herself unless particular circumstances provoke her to publicly identify as such. Moreover, Josephine's stance seemed to be extremely concerned with paying mutual respect for the opinions of others regarding captivity (even if they were very different from hers) by **not** "pushing her views on people"—a sentiment she repeats consistently throughout the interview. This is a view that is very telling of Josephine's overall stance and which I discuss more at length in another section below. Needless to say here, the importance she places on respecting the views of others by not forcing them to confront nor consider the reasoning for her principled anti-captivity position is a very liberal approach to animal advocacy and one that differs significantly from that of someone with more radical communicative tendencies like Jay. A similar approach was seen with Jane who sought to tame the conviction of her anti-captivity views by finding common-ground with others more concerned with solely ensuring animal welfare. She did this by emphasizing to others how she (also) eats meat, thereby potentially neutralizing her radical stance in the eyes of others in an effort to gain rather than lose support.

What is evident in these responses is the importance these participants place on positive interpersonal interactions in this social movement as a way to open up people to the possibility of developing an anti-captivity position. Certainly this is a tricky area for anti-captivity activists as

they must ask themselves to what extent they are willing to communicate their very strong opinions (where animals' freedom hangs in the balance) to others with subtlety; in contrast, anything too principled and headstrong may be perceived by others as aggressive and judgemental, subsequently scaring people away, and leaving anti-captivity activists to be identified, once again, as "radical" and thus illegitimate. As the responses above demonstrate, these participants maintain that the success of the cause is dependent on mutually respectful dialogues that do not tend towards a knee-jerk confrontation. When the case for anti-captivity is presented to those with welfarist leanings, these participants maintain it must be approached with patience and a willingness to hear other people's opinions (even if their arguments are problematic). In terms of practicality this seems reasonable and effective, although it is concerning when the desire for achieving common ground in terms of anti-captivity relies on discourse that use the oppression of farmed animals as a tool to achieve this end. As an example, Jane has been shown to rely on communication strategies highlighting her consumption of meat as a way to position herself as "normal" when confronted with skeptics of the anti-captivity cause (e.g. "It makes my heart sink when you see people going in there [Marineland] and you try giving them some information, and they yell back at you *"you're a loser, get a job you tree-hugging vegan"*. And I'm like *"I have three jobs! I eat meat! Why are you going in there!?"*"). This is not only morally contradictory, but further reinforces a hierarchy among the worth of different animal species that might more seriously divide the movement at Marineland between those with strong animal rights and/or liberation views (for *all* animals), and the rest who might have more confused views on the moral status of animals.

Of course the potential for social movement division as a result of respectful communication gone awry will always remain a concern. Nonetheless, some participants more

thoroughly recognize that the makeup of social movements are to be naturally divided as a diversity of beliefs and tactics among its supporters is inevitable. Jay and Rob both 'credit' the diversity of the anti-Marineland struggle resulting from the *Toronto Star* exposé propelled by former Marineland staff whistleblowers.

As discussed in chapter two, there has been a sustained resistance against Marineland for several decades and has largely encompassed activists with similar anti-captivity views; after the *Toronto Star* coverage though, the resistance broadened to also include those with more conservative, welfarist views. For Jay and Rob, this carried pros and cons. Returning to the concern raised earlier about ensuring the movement's legitimacy, one thing that they expressed strong resentment towards was how the strength in numbers at Marineland demonstrations post-2012 arose from the claims brought forward by whistleblowers who did not initially⁷⁵ regard anti-captivity perspectives as worthwhile (rather, the need to improve the conditions to proper standards at Marineland was paramount). They were disappointed that, at least in the eyes of the public, these former Marineland staff were ironically seen as the only legitimate sources of information on why Marineland was a bad place, thereby reinforcing that animal activists at Marineland have rarely (if ever) been viewed as bearers of (unbiased) knowledge on this topic. Furthermore, while these whistleblowers helped to initiate a range of support for the cause, this new support was probably for very different reasons than those held by the anti-captivity activists that preceded them. Rather than wholly regarding social movement diversity as a setback though, Jay and Rob saw it as a complicated issue that social justice activists (at Marineland and beyond) continue to grapple with in terms of its relative strength and effectiveness. When I asked Jay whether or not she saw a small number of similarly-aligned

⁷⁵ Of course, since at the time of writing this thesis there has been almost two years time lapse since the initial *Toronto Star* reports, there is a strong possibility that those former staff whistleblowers who came forth (and who remain committed to the cause to this day) may have evolved towards an anti-captivity stance.

advocates at Marineland as optimal as opposed to the large and perhaps clashing movement of diverse opinions evident now, she hesitated:

Um...I'm always torn on this because I think, *"okay, more people means more awareness, more education, it is helpful. We get more attention and whatever"*. But deep down there's always this little voice telling me that, you know, if we are not advocating for complete abolition or liberation, then we're saying *"it's okay to um, you know, keep animals in captivity as long as the conditions are good. It's okay to have really slow, gradual, welfare progress rather than like an animal rights or abolitionist perspective, um where it's like they don't belong there."* That's the only...that's our baseline that we'll accept. That's it. We won't accept that they have bigger tanks, or we won't accept that they have cleaner water or better medical care. That's not what our end-goal is. So I guess I would have to say that I would be more on the smaller more focused group than the larger, more diverse, murky group [laughter]. . . It's hard [emphasis] because you're like *"I want more people, I want more people to know about it, I want them to learn about it and form their own opinion"*, but...I want them...[pause]...I don't want to be thought of as a person who thinks it's okay for animals to be in captivity as long as their conditions are good and they have good care, because I don't.

Even though it is hard for her to reach this conclusion, Jay trumps the rationale for a large base of support for the anti-Marineland cause instead with a case for a smaller social movement that is morally consistent and unquestionably aligned with anti-captivity principles. Since Jay has previously expressed firm opinions against making compromises on her praxis, this view is not surprising. In contrast, Rob's concern surrounding social movement diversity was more on how it created sub-groups of movements across an already relatively⁷⁶ small group that hinders its ability to practice consensus-based decision-making (something that he claims grassroots movements in particular value). Of course the potential for animal advocates to reach a consensus in terms of strategy is highly contentious since it depends on their willingness to form alliances with others possessing different views, and their ability to negotiate competing views. I asked my participants whether or not they felt this was possible.

⁷⁶ Referring to how animal welfare and rights causes as a general matter do not achieve the same recognition that some other social justice causes do, and much less from the majority of the public who are uninformed about social justice issues in general.

Alliances: Problems and Possibilities

For those holding anti-captivity views, there was little negotiation in terms of making concessions regarding ultimate goals at the park— shutting down the park and/or removing animal displays has been and continues to be the axis of their advocacy. The possibility for generating alliances with those possessing traditional welfarist views was thus centered around their ability to consolidate them into these more radical views rather than concede to accept their reformist goals as a way to lead to an ultimate victory. As an example, for Jay, the suggestion to build alliances with those possessing disparate goals than her was a worthwhile opportunity in order to shape their views towards a more morally-consistent aim. She remarks:

I would be interested in building alliances um that..[pause, smiles]...this is gonna sound terrible...I'm not interested...this is gonna sound really bad. I'm not interested in hear...I'll hear someone's opinion about something, it doesn't mean I have to believe it. I respect that everyone has an opinion, I might not respect *that* opinion itself. So to be quite honest, I wouldn't be interested in building a reciprocal relationship where I learn from them and I maybe change my ideas, because that's not gonna happen [smiles]. But, yeah definitely interested in having a relationship where I could try and open their eyes.

Like Jay, Jane and Josephine were also motivated towards a preminent goal of *teaching* those they saw as not possessing enough knowledge on the fundamental perils of animal captivity. Where they differed was in their communicative approach.

While Jay makes unapologetic claims drawing attention to others' flaws in argumentation as apologists for the captivity of animals, Josephine prefers a 'soft' approach trying to find ways of relating to their points of view (such as telling them about how she used to go to zoos, marine parks, and "swimming with dolphins" programs and becoming educated about their inherent problems prompted her to embrace the more progressive anti-captivity stance she holds now). She suggests the possibility that those advocates at Marineland fighting for more reformist "victories" may just see that as the only realistic goal, and thus worth pursuing, and not because

they ideologically deem them as morally adequate. Because of this possibility, Josephine is wary of any hardline approach that might scare people away from the anti-captivity inclinations they may be eventually open to understanding. To return to an earlier point she raises about not being overly "pushy" with her views, Josephine then approaches the possibility of building alliances with other animal advocates around "sharing views" where mutual *learning* takes place and *respect* of conflicting opinions is reciprocal.

This dialectic approach differs substantially from radical abolitionists like Jay and instead sees libertarianism (whereby "two sides to a story" are given equal weight and consideration) as an appropriate response. Although this rationale for a 'healthy debate' based on mutual respect of all sides has arguably gained traction on the left (subsequently moving certain left politics more to the center⁷⁷), there is a looming critique by more radical progressives that this approach provides undeserved space for fundamentally flawed and morally backwards logic. Rather, critics of this approach like Jay and Rob express an unnerving possibility that not being principled enough in anti-captivity advocacy could mean that traditional welfarists may stop short of realizing the rationale for anti-captivity and remain stagnant in their views. Jay's response below illustrates this angst:

Um...[pause]...I hate to put people down that do things that they believe in..but I think that those [welfarist] efforts make it seem like once those things are kind of checked off, then it's okay. And we can walk away, and our job is done, our hands are clean and those animals, you know, have good water, big tanks, good vets, and we're done, our job's done and we can go on about our lives. And I think that it makes...it's easier for people to buy into that, and I think that leads to more complacency. Then more people are going to be okay with animals being there in the first place, so I think it's dangerous, and I don't support it, don't really like it. And I think that some people that would call themselves 'welfarists' would probably be open to a rightist perspective if they maybe knew a little more about

⁷⁷ An example of this can be seen in a growing societal trend to grant equal space and consideration to 'both sides of the debate' in regards to abortion. While anti-choice rhetoric calls for actions that interfere with women's rights to bodily autonomy and could be regarded as hate speech, this liberal rationale holds that both pro choice and 'pro life' arguments should have fair representation in espousing their views for others to draw conclusions on.

it. . . I hate to discourage people that legitimately think they are doing something 'right' and 'good', but I have a problem with, you know, supporting that kind of welfarist belief, so I don't support it.

Here and in passages above, it is clear that anti-captivity activists tread very carefully in their interactions with those pioneering animal welfare at Marineland. Jay's responses in particular suggest the possibility that traditional welfarists are firmly positioned in their views and that only with careful calculation will it be possible to mold alliances with them that will work in the interests of those advocating anti-captivity. To what extent is this an accurate appraisal though? As for Kristen, her pro-zoo mentality certainly showcased that a possibility for alliances with anti-captivity activists would be incredibly difficult since she deemed their views too ideologically opposed to hers. In this case, the appraisal is correct. However, my interview with Joanne illuminated another unexpected possibility, that which demonstrated the vulnerability of a traditional welfare ethic in regards to animal captivity for entertainment, and the ease with which an anti-captivity rationale could be fostered.

"I Love Looking at Them"

When I first sat down with Joanne, immediately apparent was her admiration for exotic and wild animals. Her traditional welfare ethic was then premised on a desire to treat the animals she loves with care while at the same time being able to physically interact with them in zoo and marine institutions (something she maintains would be impossible for her to do if they *all* remained in the wild). As I sought to reach a fuller understanding around how she rationalizes the captivity of animals for entertainment purposes (at Marineland and in other captive animal institutions) in the face of glaring critiques from her more radical anti-captivity counterparts, it became more clear that the her justifications were shaky and opinions around captivity were overall unsure:

Well, they [anti-captivity activists] have a right to their opinion, absolutely. . . but see, I love looking at them. I know it's not right; they're [animals] not in their natural habitat. [Pondering]. It's such a hard thing. I love looking at them! And I know that it's not right that they're taken out of their natural habitat and put in a zoo [pause]...But I really like looking at them. But like I said, I want them to be taken care of, that's big. . . It's kinda hard. I understand both [rights and welfare] points. . .ughhh it's so hard!

Realizing that she was conflicted, I probed her further on a point raised by anti-captivity activists. As Jay's '*Francione-ist*' stance overall demonstrates, there is a great concern that if Marineland animal advocates were to try to improve the standards of care for animals currently (something that Joanne has thus far maintained is essential), then it could consequently mean that places like Marineland will thrive since people might become comfortable with the idea of exploiting animals so long as it is seemingly done with 'care'. I asked Joanne how she makes sense of this critique and how she would respond. To my surprise, she was visibly perplexed:

Right. You have a point there. You do have a point there. [Pondering, long pause]... Wow. [laughter]. That's a toughie. You're right. You're right. . . Exploiting animals? [pondering, long pause]. I guess you have a point there.

Given that Joanne has demonstrated a strong disdain for the captivity of marine animals in particular⁷⁸, it would make sense that she would take this concern raised by anti-captivity activists *at Marineland* seriously. What was more unexpected was how me drawing attention to the notion of animal *exploitation* in captive environments *as a whole* as a result of welfare initiatives pushed her into almost instantaneously realizing the rationale for anti-captivity on a more radical and principled basis. Furthermore, her answers following an acknowledgement of this critique directly reference her critics by pointing out her own recognition of the flaws in her justification for keeping animals in cages. She says:

...yeah...man it's hard. 'Cause I do love...I know **they** [anti-captivity activists] say "*oh you love animals, but you want to see them in a cage?*" No [emphasis]. I don't want to see them in a cage, I like to see them in their natural habitat...but I'm not

⁷⁸ See previous discussion on limitations of perceived space under the heading '*Different Types of Captivity*'

going to stop myself from seeing them [in a zoo]! 'Cause I do love to see them. I know, it's a funny little conflicting thing there isn't it? . . . I guess that's selfish on my part, 'cause I like to see them.

At this point it became clearly evident that raising critical points for consideration to those with traditional welfare leanings regarding the captivity of animals for entertainment could return more enlightened viewpoints. When I conducted my interviews, I was very conscious to not insert my own opinions on the topics raised so as not to sway the participants' responses in directions not representative of their views. However, since I was concerned with understanding the possibility for Marineland animal advocates to work together and build alliances in their continued fight, I felt it was important to draw attention to the arguments and critiques raised by their ideological opponents. In the end I was very glad I did because, as demonstrated in the case of Joanne, it succeeded in encouraging her to consider and reflect upon the relative strength of her argumentative position. In Joanne's case, she not only recognized the flaws behind the traditional welfare perspective she walked in with, but was also able to make connections regarding ethical problems surrounding the use of animals in other sectors (such as food). Her critical comprehension is exhibited below when we discussed the pervasiveness of animal abuse in society:

I'm sure this [animal abuse] goes on every day. Everyday. 'Cause we lived on a farm. We had chickens and a horse, we had a pony, and we took care of the animals. They weren't abused in any way, but you know...you see there you go...that's another thing. By farming them, you're confining them! [pause]...it's so hard! . . . Now I'm going to go home and be like *"I guess I'm against all this"* [captivity of animals for human use] [laughter]. A part of me loves it [captivity], and a part of me disagrees with it. That's all I can tell ya...

It was very encouraging to see Joanne's remarkable shift in perspective during the brief time we sat down and discussed Marineland. While this case does not conclusively demonstrate that a traditional welfare ethos is bound to crumble in the face of a more progressive anti-captivity

rationale, it certainly opens up that possibility and illustrates the potential for a vegan ethic of care to help people form more well-rounded and thoughtful perspectives on how to actually alleviate the suffering of the captive animals they claim to *love*. The first step is certainly a suspension of weak justifications advanced by the status-quo that the captivity of animals in unnatural settings somehow does not constitute abuse. As was illustrated here, by asking some critical questions, a critique against Marineland for its poor welfare standards can just as easily be transcended to a critique against all captive institutions. As demonstrated by the responses in this section in entirety, only if traditional welfare advocates remain at least open to this rationale will it be possible for anti-Marineland advocates to form alliances that will work towards a common goal: that of either shutting down the park and/or ridding its animal displays— not more "humane" exploitation. Of course, possible ideological tensions among advocates is a relatively minor concern facing this movement when considering other more threatening setbacks. In the final section of this chapter's analysis I investigate the terrain of political persecution facing animals advocates at Marineland, and how this is situated within a fight against the interests of capitalism.

6.6 The Bigger Picture: Corporate Repression and Anti-Capitalism

Research Question 4: "What are anti-Marineland advocates' experiences with and/or perspectives on political persecution in this social movement, and has this broadened their perspectives on the nature of captive animal industries?"

The last two years has seen an amazing number of developments in the Marineland saga. With its nefarious historical record of activist repression already established⁷⁹, it is concerning, although not surprising, to see this trend continue and escalate with more recent attempts to target activists and whistleblowers through various forms of corporate backlash. The

⁷⁹ See chapter two, section 2.2 'Marineland vs. NAFa'

corresponding resistance by activist dissidents has reached unprecedented levels in response to not only the new and disturbing accounts of animal cruelty at the park, but also Marineland's callous efforts at crushing their legal forms of protest through various means. Of course, an in-depth examination of the controversy as of late could constitute a research project on its own; with that said, here I attempt to illustrate some of the most noteworthy repressive tactics by Marineland and its stakeholders against activists as an additional concern (to the other topics raised in this paper) facing this social movement. My own observations at the 2013 demonstrations as well as the personal recollections of some of my participants provide some alarming instances of corporate repression which have profoundly influenced the experiences and perspectives of those active in the struggle. In addition to the examples raised in chapter two, the accounts below demonstrate formidable concern for those active in anti-oppressive struggles, and demonstrate the lengths corporations like Marineland will go to ensure their private interests. Next, I examine the political significance of these concerns (including SLAPP suits, injunctions, and accreditation) as documented by participants' responses as well as my personal observations through participant observation at demonstrations. I then look at the ways in which activists resist these instances of repression, and whether or not a recognition of corporate repression translates into a more expansive critique around captive animal institutions, animal use, and/or capitalism for my participants.

Political Persecution and Silencing Protest

Having been active in the struggle before the 2012 turn of events, Rob told me about one of John Holer's initial strategies to curb the effectiveness of activists' anti-captivity message reaching the public. Before Holer was granted land leases of sections of municipal property by the City of Niagara Falls (see chapter two), activists regularly congregated to leaflet to incoming

patrons at Marineland's vehicle entrance. Clearly perturbed by the effectiveness of this tactic, Rob recalls that during the 2011 season Holer and some of his employees decided to post a sign on a municipal pole that read "Protestors ahead. Please do not stop" (see Figure 3⁸⁰) thereby alerting oncoming traffic to ignore the activists they would encounter ahead. According to Rob, since the pole resided on public property, some activists attempted to remove the sign while he filmed their interactions with Holer. In the end, because of Holer's attempts to intervene and stop them from taking down the sign along with lack of police intervention, the sign remained intact.

Of course this attempt at challenging the efforts of activists was quite mild compared to the more aggressive and intimidating measures that we see today. The SLAPP suits directed against whistleblowers and some prominent activists was something that all of my participants saw as an incredibly troublesome development in their resistance against the park (especially in terms of its blatant disregard for civil liberties supposedly protected by our Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, including freedom of expression and freedom of peaceful assembly).

Some participants also drew attention to the complicity of other organizations in their tacit support of Marineland that likewise belittle the claims initiated by activists. For instance, Jay, Rob, and Kristen spoke boldly about the conflict of interest presented by the Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums' (CAZA) inspection of the park (following the allegations of neglect and cruelty). Since CAZA is a self-regulating body comprised of paying association members (of which Marineland is a part of), questions ought to be raised regarding the self-serving motivations behind the accreditation process (Diebel & Casey, 2012; Laidlaw, 2002). Indeed, Zoocheck Canada's 2002 report on CAZA's decision to grant accreditation to Marineland in October 2000 shows how Marineland fails to meet several of CAZA's standards of care (Laidlaw, 2002). As a result, there is a legitimate reason to question Marineland's basis for

⁸⁰ This photo was taken by me at a different time than Rob's recall of events during the 2011 season.

accreditation and whether or not CAZA can be a neutral party in either confirming or denying the lack of welfare standards accused by whistleblowers and animal advocates. Not surprisingly, CAZA as well as the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to animals (OSPCA) gave Marineland a passed inspection. Regarding the OSPCA, Jay also remarked that its responsibility for investigating accusations of animal cruelty rests solely on examining the animals **not** under private veterinary care (as it turns out, the majority of animals at Marineland are under the supervision of a hired veterinarian, thus making a third-party investigation into the allegations of abuse raised by whistleblowers futile) ("Marineland and the College of Veterinarians of Ontario [CVO]", 2013).

These outside parties' inspections raises questions about a possible alignment with Marineland's corporate interests, especially given that the photographic and video evidence released by whistleblowers shows animals in obvious distress and pain. This represents a disappointing outcome by supposedly "impartial" third-party inspectors that Marineland capitalized on in an attempt to further belittle the voices of animal advocates, and thus repress the legitimacy of their message in the eyes of the public. As my personal observations at demonstrations further suggest, the obstacles facing activists remain omnipresent.

On July 27th 2013 I attended an "International Empty the Tanks" demonstration hosted by M.A.D. A global day of action calling upon concerned citizens to gather at their local captive marine animal facilities to protest animal imprisonment, roughly 250 people in the Niagara region assembled outside of Marineland for a peaceful protest. At this point, lawsuits and land leases frustrated activists in their ability to voice their opposition without being vulnerable to breaking the law. As a result, the majority of attendees decided to use this demonstration to illustrate the impediment of activists' speech and actions to onlookers by wearing pink tape

across their mouths as a symbol of repression (see Figure 18). What they were not prepared for at this time was the even greater lengths Marineland would take soon after to further mute their message.

In early August 2013, Holer sought and was granted an injunction against the use of megaphones by M.A.D activists as well as the use of particular words on protest signs that attempt to incriminate him (including "abuse", "torture", and "criminal") (Day, 2013). M.A.D has claimed that violation of this injunction by activists would result in the group being found in contempt of court, thus organizer(s) being at risk of owing a burden of fines. In response, a surprise silent demonstration was prompted by M.A.D on August 17th 2013. Inspired by the "Standing Man" lone protestor in Istanbul's Taksim Square⁸¹, the "Stand Against Captivity" demonstration was an alternative form of protest that used silence *as a tactic* to make a statement on Marineland's repressive conduct. On their website, M.A.D claims: "If they want our silence, we will show them how our silence can have power. Our power is not in the words we use, or the signs we hold, but in the strength of our conviction. That cannot be bought, broken, jailed or sold" ("M.A.D Statement on Standing Person Protest #StandAgainstCaptivity", 2013). Approximately twenty activists convened on site that day, standing in a row watching patrons as they entered (and left) the park from behind the chain link fence. The odd assemblage of people outside the park's boundaries caught the attention of some patrons throughout the day, and those in the general public following the actions of M.A.D. In demonstrations following, M.A.D formulated other ways of working around the legal restrictions placed on them rather than being

⁸¹ Standing in front of a portrait of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (founder of modern, secular Turkey), performance artist Erdem Gunduz used this silent vigil as a way to draw attention to and protest the mass governmental repression and state violence of Turkish activists (including a moratorium issued against them on the use of social media like Twitter). The civil unrest seen in Turkey today can be recently traced to the government's plan for urban development in Taksim Gezi Park, and residents' desire to protect the commons. Since then the unrest has encapsulated more fundamental concerns including the continual violation of basic liberties by the Turkish government and the rise in police brutality. Gunduz's protest gained popularity with hundreds of other citizens joining him, garnering global attention (Mohamed, 2013).

set back by them. These strategies included: carefully assembling outside of the leased property, communicating with each other through mic checks⁸², and chanting to patrons without megaphones. Also, other anti-Marineland activists not affiliated with M.A.D decided to start leafleting anti-captivity literature and information on Marineland in the main tourist area of Niagara Falls as a way to dissuade potential visitors to the park.

Tactics such as these show that Marineland's attempts to silence its opposition are continually resisted by activists; at times these silencing strategies achieve little in hindering activists' abilities. Nevertheless, there continues to be an uphill battle for activists in terms of challenging not only Marineland, but also other state institutions that seek to indirectly weaken the structural base of their advocacy which substantially conflicts with the status-quo. For instance, when I attended the Labour Day demonstration on September 2nd 2013, demonstrators were irked at Niagara regional police's threats to issue parking tickets to the roughly fifty vehicles parked in an open area across from Marineland citing violation of parking laws, especially since the year before police claimed it was all right to do so. For demonstrators, it appeared to them that the Niagara regional police viewed the law as malleable rather than exacting, finding ways to further frustrate demonstrators' ability to carry out their peaceful, and legal, protest.

In addition to the issues presented by the state police apparatus, the local media have also presented problems to anti-Marineland organizers. For instance, M.A.D has claimed that local media "journalism" (under the ownership of right-wing agency Quebecor Media Incorporated [QMI]) has time and again bowed to corporate interests (like Marineland which wields power in the region) subsequently compromising journalistic integrity by not truly representing the

⁸² A tactic used in the recent 'Occupy' movement, mic checks are used to mobilize people into one space whereby the crowd repeats the speaker's comments in unison as a way to spread a message without the aid of an amplification system.

disenfranchised voices of those advancing social justice causes ("John Law, QMI and the Marineland Animal Defense 'Cult'", 2012). Since QMI holds a monopoly on media in the Niagara region, the majority of press succumbs to the right-leaning media bias, at times relaying misleading or false information⁸³ on the actions and motivations of anti-Marineland protestors. At the Labour Day demonstration, M.A.D organizers were frustrated to see a local *Niagara Falls Review* reporter seek to get statements from demonstrators since, they claim, this particular reporter has previously bashed the group's efforts and made false statements about their actions without retraction. As a result, most protestors at the demonstration refused to provide him with statements since they saw his allegiance as tied with corporate institutions (that tacitly support Marineland) rather than with their cause.

Observing the experiences of activists on the ground clearly illuminates the subtle ways in which state institutions seek to belittle the efforts of those fighting against the status-quo. Because the mainstream media act as a mouthpiece for corporate interests, very often these instances of repression felt by activists go unnoticed by the general public. For all of my participants that have been *active* in Marineland demonstrations (Jay, Rob, Jane, and Josephine) there was a sweeping recognition that political repression and/or persecution has been and continues to be a looming threat in their advocacy as a result of their alternative views that clash with those harbored by mainstream society. As Jane remarks below, repressive tactics are expected:

It's an attempt to shut up the protestors! What they [Marineland and media] want to do is put up a false façade out there that everyone else sees as "*Oh, that's just all those protestors, and the protestors are crazy you know? They are, they just want every animal to be free. . . they can't even think straight because they don't eat meat* [laughter]. *They're just crazy. They're crazy, tree-hugging, radical...most*

⁸³ Some examples include: claiming that M.A.D organizers initiated activists to storm the gates and enter the park illegally on Closing Day 2012, and labeling M.A.D as a "cult" ("John Law, QMI and the Marineland Animal Defense 'Cult'", 2013).

of them are unemployed". Have you heard the things they [Marineland and media] say about us?

Adding to this point, all six participants explicitly recognized that Marineland's various attempts at silencing dissent were a strategic and even inevitable response in an effort to safeguard their sole business interest at profit accumulation. I was then interested in seeing if that realization (regarding Marineland's ruthless pursuit of profits) subsequently translated into more evolved views on the nature of captive animal industries, especially as cogs sustaining capitalism. The perspectives on this point were mixed.

Expanding the Lens of Critique?

As evidenced by their responses overall, maintaining a political voice in the face of steady opposition by Marineland has certainly shaped my participants' views on corporate repression. Rather than merely seeing the moral problems associated with animal captivity independently of the corporate victimization felt by animal activists, all six participants viewed the struggles as interconnected, and stated that Marineland's financial capital has been and continues to be a significant motivator⁸⁴ for sustaining oppression (of the animals themselves and the advocates speaking out for them). Having said that, the extent to which these criticisms of Marineland's pursuit for profits expanded into a more fully-rounded critique on the nefarious structure of capitalism varied. For Jay, the multiple quandaries at Marineland were illustrative of a bigger societal problem—that which sees animals as commodities to be bought and sold rather than as sentient beings with the right to live independently of humans' desire to market them as means to a financial end. The entirety of Jay's interview revealed a strong anti-capitalist stance and a need for a new world order that does not exploit animals. She attributes her enlightened views to her time as a Sociology student and as an activist, which has profoundly shaped her

⁸⁴ An additional consideration is that Holer may be holding on to this business out of spite, especially since the SLAPP suits issued, lawyer fees, and so on are incredibly costly to him.

views on how society is structured around inequalities that necessitate active resistance in order to dismantle them. In terms of inequalities facing animals, Jay is not only concerned with animal captivity as exploited entertainers, but also how the captivity industry is inherently tied up with broader processes of exploitation as exemplified by the dolphin hunt⁸⁵ in Taiji, Japan, and the global commodification of animal bodies for food, as research subjects, and as clothing and textile material. Because of the ubiquity of animal use that permeates almost every facet of our existence under capitalism, she argues that state institutions premised on the use of animals will undoubtedly do everything in their power to squash any opposition by concerned citizens. In regards to the marginalization facing activists at Marineland, she saw it as concerning but not debilitating:

I think it's important to not let it [repressive tactics] stop people from voicing their concerns, and actively oppose Marineland because that marginalization of dissent has happened throughout history with different social movements, and it's kind of a road block but not something that should stop people because these are important issues that I and people in these groups are fighting for. And it's [political repression] expected because it's going against the social norms and it's going against big business and big ideology, so it's got to be expected that they're [Marineland] not going to be just like *"Okay, sure you're [animal activists] right. There you go whales, go ahead, close up shop"*, you know? You have to know getting into it that it's not going to be easy, it's not going to be cut and dry— it's going to be long. . . And, you know, Marineland and John Holer have a lot more money that really speaks in our economy than I do or any of the whistleblowers or other animal rights activists have. And that's not to say it's [activism] not important to do it, it's just hard.

Echoing very similar arguments as Jay, Rob also expressed his staunchly anti-capitalist stance by prioritizing intersectional leftist politics as a way to achieve social justice. Citing issues of sexism in mainstream animal rights advocacy (like PETA), labour issues present at Marineland (whereby workers are paid low wages and hold precarious positions), and continual attacks on

⁸⁵ More information on this hunt can be seen in the film 'The Cove'. See: DuPré Pesmen, P., & Stevens, F. (Producers), & Psihoyos, L. (Director). (2009). *The cove*. [Motion Picture]. United States: Diamond Docs, Fish Films, Oceanic Preservation Society.

animal rights protestors by corporations and state delegates (e.g. police, the courts, media), Rob's critiques on the captive animal industry (and animal industries in general) have been well-informed for quite some time (although he says current involvement in this struggle further reinforces his ideological conviction).

For Jay and Rob, their involvement in the anti-Marineland struggle was a logical extension of their well-informed views; for others, their activism at Marineland led to an evolution of their opinions about other animal industries. For instance, the experiences that developed from being an anti-Marineland activist prompted Josephine to remain informed on the continuous controversies at SeaWorld in Orlando, Florida, and look more thoroughly into the various problems that factory farming presents in terms of animal cruelty and the unsustainability of our planet. Likewise, Jane credits this experience as influential in prompting her to investigate animal cruelty in other industries (in particular, the food industry and the moral issues surrounding wool and angora in the clothing and textiles industry). This is certainly a very promising indicator that activism presents an exceptional learning experience, gradually shifting people towards more progressive views, especially on the backwardness of animal exploitation across *all* sectors. Further, these findings provide evidence to suggest that single-issue campaigns (like the anti-Marineland social movement) may aid in the evolution of ideas toward a more ethically-consistent vegan end-goal— not act as a deterrent. This contrasts significantly with Francione's (2010) assertion which regards single-issue campaigns as "unsound as a matter of theory. . .[and] have not had much practical effect" (p. 77); here, he claims that single-issue campaigns effectively limit people's breadth of understanding to the moral problems inherent in one industry rather than a more comprehensive understanding of the case for veganism more broadly. Rather, these points of view offered by actual activists on-the-ground offer an

alternative consideration which may help shape other animal rights and/or liberation activists views on tactics going forward.

While Jane and Josephine illustrate the possibility for more evolved views on the rights of animals as a result of their experiences in Marineland animal advocacy, the extent to which these translate into more fundamental critiques on the capitalist empire— to which these industries are endemic and thrive under— is more difficult to gauge. For instance, while Jay and Rob recognize that the police force act as a state delegate whose interests revolve around protecting industries like Marineland by surveilling and repressing or persecuting the actions of activists, Jane instead viewed the police in a positive light saying that "the police [have been] awesome"⁸⁶ throughout the campaign. This is an odd proclamation since, as Rob notes, the police presence monitoring the actions of activists at Marineland demonstrations has been unusually large and consistently so—"peaceful demo after peaceful demo".

Clearly, Jane's qualms about the captive animal industry have not (yet) developed into a more thorough and underlying critique of the capitalist state structures that tacitly uphold the captive institutions she seeks to dismantle. For someone active in demonstrations though, it is possible that these views may sharpen and become more critical with future participation in this struggle and more direct interactions with other more radical activists. Speaking for myself, this was certainly the case in the gradual evolution of my views from moderate reformist to radical anti-capitalist. For advocates more concerned with maintaining a standard of animal welfare at Marineland without direct participation in social movement activism though , the possibility for a significant evolution of views regarding the pitfalls of statist apparatuses under capitalism may be less likely. As evidenced by Kristen's opinions, she maintains that an owner of a captive

⁸⁶ Referring to when police officers would act as traffic escorts, assisting activists to cross the street to the demonstration site so they would not trespass on Marineland's areas of leased land.

animal institution can be "good global citizen while still owning a profitable business" so long as it is done responsibly and with a standard of (welfare) "care". This perspective is not surprising given that her approval of the existence of zoos and aquariums (and thus the captive animal industry as a whole) would mean that a critique of its capitalist state counterparts is unwarranted and unnecessary. Rather, here Kristen seems to support and celebrate the business mentality that profit accumulation is a worthwhile goal so long as it is accompanied by good and not "greedy" intentions (a profile she attaches to a business owner like John Holer). This view is representative of a centrist ideological position— one that justifies animal captivity as well as the capitalist state of which it is a part. Unfortunately, this view neglects to consider how capitalism is inherently built upon the exploitation of the natural world (animals and the planet's resources), as well as the oppression of marginalized humans which needs to be actively fought against, not accepted (Nibert, 2002). Animal advocates at Marineland (and elsewhere) ought to critically examine how the interconnected structures of the state all play a role in maintaining the subordination of animals and their interests; with that said, solving problems around animal cruelty cannot and should not be approached unilaterally, but rather attacked from all angles. As these participants' responses demonstrate, the experiences that come with being part of a social movement where political repression is abound, is pivotal in progressively shaping their views towards a more just world (for humans and animals).

Chapter Seven: Implications and Conclusions

7.1 Summary of Research and Findings

Conducting this research was prompted by both exploratory and political aims. Motivated by a desire to more thoroughly investigate not only the veracity of the existing dualistic discourse of animal welfare versus animal rights, but, more specifically, how it is played out in the entertainment sector, my goal as a researcher was to broaden the theoretical paradigm in ways that speak to critical nuances and that more accurately reflect the lived experiences of animal advocates on the ground. Moreover, as an activist at Marineland myself, the goals of this project also reflected my own personal stakes in better understanding the nature of the struggle in the hopes of working towards meaningful solutions for animals amidst a barrage of barriers. As a locus for in-depth exploration on a variety of issues surrounding animal rights social movements, the case of Marineland has served as an illuminating illustration on these and multiple other fronts.

First, in an attempt to situate the controversies enveloping Marineland today within a broader historical context, chapter two discussed its history of animal activism and the ensuing attempts by Marineland and its various stakeholders to silence its critics. Certainly, their attempts at political repression of concerned citizens have been and remain (as seen in chapter six) an alarming concern regarding assault on civil liberties such as freedom of expression and right to peaceful assembly; in addition to the other (multiple) quandaries surrounding captive animal institutions, these attempts to silence dissent have situated Marineland as particularly unique for investigation. Of course, as chapter four details, Marineland's current attacks on animal advocates are not surprising given its controversial history (see: Sorenson, 2008; Zoocheck, 1998); in addition, it is expected since today's North American temporal landscape (strongly influenced by those who benefit from animal exploitation) is framed around seeing animal rights

political dissidents as one strain of the growing threat of "eco-terrorism"—an alarming means to chill dissent as a result of their interference with animal industries' profit accumulation (see: Best & Nocella II, 2004; Liddick, 2006; Lovitz, 2010; Monaghan & Walby, ND; Potter, 2011).

Nevertheless, rather than effectively halt animal advocates' in their tracks, these attempts have been consequential, serving to reinforce advocates' principled opposition to the park on ethical and political grounds. With this context established, my research sought to examine the views and experiences of those advocates' currently at the center of the fight, following the recent dissemination of allegations and evidence of animal abuse by former staff whistleblowers to the *Toronto Star* newspaper in August 2012. Through participant observation and interview methodologies, I sought to explore anti-Marineland animal advocates' ideological inclinations regarding animal captivity, how their views inform their praxes (i.e. advocating traditional "humane welfare", incremental animal rights, abolitionist animal rights or animal liberation), possibilities for alliances between advocates working towards alternate goals, and possible connections to capitalism. As the preceding findings and analysis suggested, complexities within their outlooks are abundant and there remains multiple points of contestation not only between advocates, but also within themselves.

First, it has been demonstrated that rigid categorizations of animal advocates under stereotypical "rights" and "welfare" labels are inaccurate since their motivations are not always as clear and simplistic as the binary suggests. While certainly there are some advocates who adhere to an uncompromising ethic (as seen with Jay), the majority of responses point to more complex nuances in thought. For instance, it has been shown that possessing an explicit anti-captivity outlook for animals used in entertainment (as seen with Jay, Rob, Jane, and Josephine) does not necessarily translate into an all-encompassing advocacy for the rights of animal entirely

in thought and/or action (as demonstrated by moral contradictions in Jane and Josephine's non-adherence to veganism). Further, an understanding of anti-captivity is not simply a sentiment possessed by those who *identify* as animal rightists and/or liberationists; rather, it exists on a spectrum whereby even those with traditional welfare leanings have been shown to possess these feelings to one degree or another (as seen with Joanne and Kristen's claims that marine animals like orcas and dolphins should not be held captive). In terms of praxis, anti-captivity advocates endorse various rationales for the pursuit of welfare (even as they ideologically deem rights/liberation for captives morally superior). For some, animal welfare is seen as the only feasible gain for animals since our anthropocentric and speciesist social system will necessarily doom the possibility for a utopian goal of animal rights and/or liberation. For others, the pursuit of welfare can be seen as a positive incremental step forward, making the lives of animals in captivity less stressful in the present, while simultaneously making the possibility of animal rights and/or liberation more likely in the future. With that said of course, other advocates remain staunch in their disapproval for welfare as they see it as regressive tactic that returns few to no gains for the movement and the animals currently suffering in imprisonment.

Clearly then, animal advocates assess markers for progress differently even as they are seemingly motivated by the same goal of anti-captivity. Further, having similar ideological perspectives does not translate into a similar adherence to strategies and tactics deemed worth pursuing. As a result, tensions arise not only between those advocating explicitly different end-goals (i.e. anti-captivity and traditional welfare), but also those with the same end-goal of liberating animals from the oppressive conditions of captivity. Since anti-captivity proponents were unwilling to concede that traditional welfare would be a satisfactory 'win' in the movement, traditional welfarists would have to eventually transition their views towards understanding the

rationale for anti-captivity if alliances could be formed. This is very possible since Kristen and especially Joanne's views showed the fragility surrounding traditional welfare arguments in favor of animal captivity. By posing critical questions in my interviews with them, I prompted them towards self-reflexivity on the inherent detriments of animal captivity in entertainment. From these interviews, I argue the possibility that traditional welfarists in the anti-Marineland struggle may just lack a comprehensive consideration and/or understanding of the issue in its entirety; for instance, after recognizing that welfare considerations like adequate space are intrinsically unattainable in a captive setting, it then makes it very difficult to uphold the view that captivity in and of itself is morally acceptable. If anti-captivity advocates are willing to build alliances and engage with traditional welfarists—exposing them to the contradictions of their dubious rationalizations—the possibility towards a more unified movement with consistent anti-captivity goals is strong. With that said, one ought to consider the ways to approach these conversations—with uncompromising conviction like Jay, or with gentle persuasion like Rob or Josephine? In my personal assessment, I see the fundamental importance in not immediately turning people away from the cause with what may be perceived as assertions of moral purity. Defensive responses from either side are unlikely to facilitate dialogue that will aid in a resolution. Rather, active listening (or "meeting people where they're at") is key in order for traditional welfarists to hear the 'rationale' of their own (flawed) argumentation. After this, anti-captivity advocates should pose critical questions that showcase an alternative moral ethic in order for traditional welfarists to make sense of the arguments themselves (as opposed to a draconian top-down lecture which is more likely to initiate feelings of resentment and dismissal of a cause they may otherwise be persuaded to learn more about). Furthermore, it is also worth considering the ways in which even the most progressive anti-captivity vegans may also be caught within some

contradictions around morality as a result of living under a capitalist society where moral purity in entirety is impossible. With that said, anti-captivity advocates could likewise benefit from self-reflexivity on the inevitability of moral contradictions being present in their daily practices in a broader sense (e.g. food and transportation systems that are indirectly harmful to animals, humans, and the environment) to develop and/or sustain a level of humility. This would be beneficial not only for their own critical self-development, but also to more successfully communicate and build connections with those outside of their anti-captivity and/or vegan niche.

In terms of tensions *among* anti-captivity advocates, possibilities for resolutions are more complicated. As the participants' responses suggest, there are a variety of opinions on the relative effectiveness of possible strategies as well as the appropriate means toward achieving their end-goal. In the next section, I contemplate the strategies proposed, and draw conclusions on what I see as progressive steps for the movement and the animals whose interests hang in the balance.

7.2 Personal Reflections and Possible Strategies

Embarking on this research project has prompted me to grapple with a variety of competing views, consequently evolving my pre-conceived notions that I held with strong conviction for quite some time. Through a critical in-depth exploration of the current academic debates on the welfare versus abolition debates, accompanied by the informative personal perspectives of my research participants embedded in the movement, my views have shifted from an uncompromising ethic strongly parallel to the Abolitionist Approach, towards a more animal liberation incrementalism. While I have and continue to see a provocative rationale behind the Abolitionist Approach mandate that Gary Francione forwards, I nevertheless maintain that it is limited and rests upon some problematic assertions.

First, Francione and his followers outright dismiss the effectiveness of "single-issue campaigns" claiming that they serve to limit people's understanding on animal exploitation to the moral problems associated with one institution (e.g. Marineland) or one industry (e.g. entertainment). Of course this is a legitimate concern should campaign organizers explicitly claim that it is the only cause morally worth fighting against; however, as seen with Marineland animal advocacy, there is a shared commitment by organizers and some of those involved in the movement to understand that systems of oppression are linked, and that this ought to translate into critical views on other related struggles. As seen in some of my participants' responses, involvement with this movement has expanded their views on the moral issues around other animal industries, as well as the pervasiveness of political repression targeting their views that challenge the status-quo.

Second, Francione's sole form of advocacy surrounds the promotion of "non-violent vegan education" in lieu of any direct action tactics that, he maintains, are ineffective and regressive. In contrast, I tend towards an appreciation of the views espoused by Best (NDa) for "new abolitionism" whereby the fundamental abolitionist logic of theoretical moral consistency is argued at the same time recognizing that gains in social movements have not only been achieved through cultural shifts in thought, but also through active resistance and direct action anarchist tactics that have interfered with the smooth functioning of an oppressive state, and at times, forced them to concede through legislative changes (Best, NDa; Gelderloos, 2007). At Marineland, a diversity of tactics including those deemed especially radical (e.g. home demonstrations at Holer's residence and storming onto Marineland property to shut down the dolphin show) have drawn attention to the cause and the conviction of the activists while at the same time prompting the animal oppressors to fight back in ways that may raise questions among

the general public (e.g. Holer's SLAPP suits directed against protestors who were engaging in legal protest such as peaceful leafleting).

Third, Francione's theoretical approach consistently throws a blanket dismissal of the moral position and efficacy of "new welfarism". While Francione claims that all animal welfare strategies produce devastating results for animals, this is not accurate. Forwarding an abolitionist doctrine that fails to account for nuance regarding the motivations and outcomes of different types of welfare initiatives is theoretically and morally irresponsible. For instance, would it be rational to assume that celebrating victory at animal exploiters' (such as McDonald's) decision to adhere to very minimal welfare standards is equally regressive as campaigns aimed at legislative attempts to institute a welfare standard of care for animals raised for food *even when it is accompanied by a vegan message*? Francione's *complete* rejection of "new welfarism" that disregards nuance regarding its motivations and possible differential outcomes advances this bizarre notion. If this logic were to be hypothetically applied to Marineland, Francione's total dismissal of welfare as a whole would thus see advocates who would celebrate John Holer as a hero for agreeing to increase the size of the animals' enclosures as being equally problematic as efforts aimed at realistic goals that improve the welfare of animals in the present while simultaneously making clear that anti-captivity remains the ultimate goal. Of course the underlying takeaway message behind these different welfare initiatives are very different and, as a result, ought to be differentially assessed regarding the extent to which these welfare calls are inherently problematic. As incremental animal rightists like Ball (ND), Jones (2008), and Szybel (2007) would argue, there is a moral case to be made that animals are first and foremost sentient beings, and any efforts to minimize their suffering within our capacity in a system plagued by anthropocentrism and speciesism ought to be pursued since it places value on the animal, and not

just some minor modifications that, ironically, keeps animals in a perpetual state of suffering. There is little reason to suggest that solely conveying a strong case for abolitionist logic will *always* move people towards a vegan end— especially since, as has been argued previously, people's moral advocacy progresses along a spectrum and as a result of various approaches. Efforts to improve animals' lives in the present through welfare modifications while simultaneously conveying the core moral *principles* surrounding abolitionism and veganism (which is typically advocated in incremental rightists' views anyways) is a favorable pathway towards achieving the end of keeping of animals in captivity.

Having said that, I return to the 'centrist compromise' in chapter six that some may see as supposedly embodying this incremental advocacy: the "Save Marineland's Animals" petition. Indeed this was a large point of contestation for my participants; however, I see important observations from various angles. As I have stated above, from an animal liberation standpoint, I see the petition in its current form as problematic for the goals are limited to recognizing legislative standards of care for animals in zoos and aquariums as 'adequate'. As Jay would assert, any legislation that regards animal welfare violations at zoos and marine parks as problematic and necessitating resolution through *proper* standards of care without an accompanying critique of the inherent moral problems captivity possesses is dubious and irresponsible. Nevertheless, having personally reflected on this throughout this research project, I would not immediately dismiss welfare initiatives like this petition as backwards with the addendum that a strong case for an anti-captivity rationale be explicitly accompanied alongside its calls for welfare. This would reduce confusion among the public who may not understand the fundamental issue more critically, while also allowing animals in zoos and aquariums to suffer less (albeit not entirely) in their current captive state. In the case of Kiska for instance—

Marineland's lone orca whale— I think there certainly ought to be standards of care that would significantly reduce her suffering. For instance recognizing the incredibly complex social nature of marine animals like orcas, one should understand the keeping these creatures in solitary confinement without a companion is devastatingly cruel. As Canadian law states however, no such legal codes exist, demonstrating its blatant disregard for the interests of animals even at the most modest level of moral consideration— even the United States has sanctions in place that would prevent this from happening without legal consequences to the corporate owner.

Furthermore, while I do not think any possible legislation aimed at standardizing bigger tanks and enclosures for animals in zoos and aquariums could ever approximate what these wild animals need in terms of space, I am at a moral conundrum when I see marine animals in an enclosure equivalent (or even less) to the space of a human occupying a bathtub and do not respond with outrage saying that we need something better than this! I do not claim to specify some standard that Canadian law ought to adhere to in terms of space requirements for captives since any personal assessment on 'appropriate' sizes would be arbitrary; however, I still maintain that efforts to increase the amount of space captive animals have to roam would decrease the monstrosity of their suffering.

Finally and amazingly, no welfare laws exist around the general maintenance of captive institutions that even traditional welfarists would expect from these structures. At Marineland we have seen that animals reside in putrid water leading to extensive skin and eye damage, and have been denied basic veterinary care, among an array of other assaults on their most basic welfare (see: Diebel, 2012; Diebel, 2013; Diebel & Casey, 2013; Sorenson, 2008; Zoocheck Canada, 1998). It is my belief that standardizing basic welfare care for captive animals should not be up for debate— it should be prioritized and offenders should face legal consequences. While

staunch abolitionists would likely immediately cast off this perspective as morally contradictory and enabling the fundamental problem, I nonetheless seek to conciliate them towards at least understanding (if not embracing) my incremental animal liberation standpoint.

As Davis (2014) suggests, and I agree, advocacy for animal liberation does not need to dismiss the effectiveness of single-issue campaigns nor function independently of efforts to improve the welfare in the present. Throughout this research process I have come to be tremendously affected by (what I at least envision are) the lived experiences of animals in captivity. Because abolitionists are persuaded by the morally progressive theoretical argumentation for veganism without compromises, the animal has a tendency to get lost in their unapologetic views (Davis, 2014). While I recognize that their core beliefs are centered in the right place, and I do not doubt that their concern for animals is genuine, it is inconsiderate to deny that improvements in captive animals' welfare are the least we can do to minimize the severity of their plight. Of course, as I have stated, these welfare initiatives **must always** be accompanied by strong arguments that demonstrate the inherent moral pitfalls of captivity, and thus the need to move towards an anti-captivity ideological position.

Furthermore, the cultural effect of the film *Blackfish* cannot be understated, and adds to my point on how to effectively transition the masses towards an anti-captivity ethic. When I decided to conduct my research on Marineland animal advocacy in 2012, it was arguably taken up at the cusp of an incredible international shift in thought regarding animal captivity in zoos and aquariums. With the remarkable success of the documentary *Blackfish* along with a growing disdain with the culling practices of zoos (like the death of Marius the giraffe in Denmark in February 2014⁸⁷), it appears that a growing number of people are starting to question the ethics

⁸⁷ For more information on this case and the accompanying societal outrage, see: <http://rt.com/news/giraffe-dissected-danish-zoo-434/>.

of captive animal institutions (if they have not already). In the local Niagara region, Marineland was a site for a burgeoning critique on the moral conduct of "irresponsible" captive institutions (largely because of its lack of welfare standards). Of course, while the organizers of anti-Marineland demonstrations have always prioritized anti-captivity goals, the local anti-captivity movement (which has grown substantially in the last two years) could also be the result of an influential, globalized cultural shift around captivity taking place (sparked by *Blackfish*) simultaneously with the critiques of Marineland animal captivity and violation of animal welfare. In light of this flourishing global anti-captivity consciousness, it could be argued that employing strategies aimed at improving the welfare for animals at Marineland (especially when paired alongside the anti-captivity message held by the movement's radical activists) would be unlikely to halt the progress. Indeed, the critical concerns relayed in *Blackfish* explicitly and effectively surround the moral problems of captivity **inherently**, and not its lack of welfare standards as seen at Marineland for example; subsequently, the '*Blackfish* Effect' embodies the moral questioning surrounding captivity and not just the moral problems surrounding dirty water, small pools, et cetera. As a result, one ought to ask: is the problem the strategies associated with incremental animal rights and/or liberation advocacy, or perhaps an ineffective argument for anti-captivity? Before dismissing the former, I ask that readers consider the various points relayed here that speak to the nuance in the debate, and that might actually turn out to be the most progressive option for helping captive animals in the entertainment sector.

7.3 Limitations and Further Research

While I have made a thorough attempt at fulfilling the goals of this project in ways that are nuanced and insightful, there are some limitations that should be noted. As an introductory assessment of the current landscape of Marineland activism, this thesis is a valuable tool;

however, the reader should recognize some points for consideration. First, the trajectory of events at Marineland I outline here do not describe all instances of activist repression and other controversial findings of the park, but rather those most relevant instances worth highlighting for this research project. Second, the social axes of my sample were very homogenous. All of my participants were White, able-bodied, and occupying a relatively similar classed position. For those who were active in the anti-Marineland struggle, it could be deduced that activism itself constitutes a class privilege whereby the comforts of life are satisfied to the point that people can spend their time, energy, and possibly money in movements they volunteer to undertake. With that said, I recognize that animal advocacy and caring about this issue may actually encompass a more diverse set of people around differences in class, race, and ability than what has been documented in this study. Similarly, the findings and conclusions drawn from the interviews reflect the views of a very small sample of participants from the anti-Marineland movement, and the observations of the anti-Marineland demonstrations have been viewed through my own lens as a researcher and activist holding strong animal liberation views. With that said, while I have attempted to provide an accurate representation of the views of a small sample of anti-Marineland animal advocates, further research could clarify the generalizability of my findings to this social movement more broadly. Furthermore, finishing this multifaceted project within the timeframe designated for a Master's thesis was an ambitious undertaking— one that drew some interesting preliminary data that future research could further expand upon.

As I stated above, anti-Marineland advocacy today is arguably taking place within an evolving international shift in consciousness regarding the ethical issues surrounding the notion of animals on display and as performers within the zoo and aquaria captivity industry. Since this is a significant point in history, further research could look at how things like the *'Blackfish*

Effect' have affected the goals and strategies of animal advocates going forward, and the possible implementation of new bills into law that might ban the use of certain marine animals in captivity. On a related point, new research could explore the extent to which people's growing discomfort with marine animal captivity necessarily spills into a critique of the zoo industry, especially in consideration of the case of Marius the giraffe.

To return to possible avenues for future exploration at Marineland specifically, the future outcomes of the SLAPP suits directed against Marineland's most prominent agitators would be an important illustration regarding the relative rights of (animal) activists to practice freedom of expression in Canada. Regarding the views of the current movement, future inquiry could do follow-up interviews with my sample of participants in a few years time in order to see what has transpired in this case (has Marineland shut down and/or released its animal to sanctuary sites or back to the wild?) and whether or not their views on theoretical ideologies, strategies and tactics have changed with more experience in the movement and/or as a result of being embedded within a growing anti-captivity climate.

Finally, future researchers could more thoroughly take up the theoretical principles of the Abolitionist Approach and apply it to other animal advocacy social movements inside and outside the entertainment sector to see how other activists view the practical effectiveness of its staunch mandate. Expanding this inquiry regarding animal activists' praxes is of critical importance since little research exists that looks to the ideological viewpoints of advocates on-the-ground. As I have sought to make clear throughout this research, a lot can be learned from the perspectives and experiences of those active in social movement struggles; indeed, their (un)successful application of theory into practice is useful for others in social struggles to learn and reflect back upon in their future advocacy. As a preliminary look into one particular case, it

is my hope that Critical Animal Studies scholarship has been enriched by this research, and animal advocates can look to this research as an entry point for reflexivity in thought and action.

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Appendix 1: Advertisements and Letter of Invitation

Animal Rights/Liberation Advocates Poster:

Calling All Animal Rights/Liberation Advocates at Marineland!

Are you distressed that animals are held captive for entertainment purposes at Marineland? Do you believe that Marineland should be shut down, or that its animal exhibits be closed with the reintroduction/relocation of animals into the wild or sanctuaries?

If you are at least 18 years old and are an **anti-captivity animal rights/liberation activist** who has participated in a demonstration coordinated by Marineland Animal Defense (M.A.D) following the allegations of animal abuse and neglect reported in the Toronto Star Investigative Series, I want to hear from you!

I invite you to participate in a study that involves research around various ideological orientations around animal welfare and animal rights in the entertainment sector. Should you choose to participate, I will ask you to meet with me for a conversation around your perspectives on animal rights/liberation and experiences as an activist. This meeting will take place at Brock University and will take approximately 1-1.5 hours of your time.

Possible benefits of participation include a safe space to discuss your perspectives on this important local issue, as well as provide an opportunity for self-reflection on the implications of your outlooks. This may help you in deciding what actions or strategies you will pursue in the future to help animals at Marineland. If you choose to participate, you will receive a \$20 gift card to Rise Above Restaurant, and \$5 compensation for parking costs.

If you are interested in being a part of this study, and/or if you have any **questions**, please feel free to contact me, or my Faculty Supervisor

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Dept. of Sociology, Brock University
(905) 688 5550 ext. 4369
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Thank you for your interest in this study.

If you have any pertinent questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact the Brock University Research Ethics Officer (905 688 5550 ext. 3035, reb@brocku.ca)

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through Brock University's Research Ethics Board [File # 13-104]

Animal Welfare Advocates Poster:

Calling All Animal **Welfare** Advocates at Marineland!

Are you concerned about the poor conditions animals at Marineland are subjected to? Do you believe that animals displayed at Marineland deserve to be cared for better?

If you are at least 18 years old and are an **animal welfare activist** who has participated in a demonstration coordinated by Marineland Animal Defense (M.A.D) following the allegations of animal abuse and neglect reported in the Toronto Star Investigative Series, I want to hear from you!

I invite you to participate in a study that involves research around various ideological orientations around animal welfare and animal rights in the entertainment sector. Should you choose to participate, I will ask you to meet with me for a conversation around your perspectives on animal welfare and experiences as an activist. This meeting will take place at Brock University and will take approximately 1-1.5 hours of your time.

Possible benefits of participation include a safe space to discuss your perspectives on this important local issue, as well as provide an opportunity for self-reflection on the implications of your outlooks. This may help you in deciding what actions or strategies you will pursue in the future to help animals at Marineland. If you choose to participate, you will receive a \$20 gift card to Rise Above Restaurant, and \$5 compensation for parking costs.

If you are interested in being a part of this study, and/or if you have any **questions**, please feel free to contact me, or my Faculty Supervisor

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Thank you for your interest in this study.

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This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through Brock University's Research Ethics Board [File # 13-104]

Letter of Invitation:

[date]

Title of Study: Ideological Orientations for Animal Advocacy in the Entertainment Sector: A Case Study of Marineland Canada

Principal Student Investigator: Liz Smith, Graduate Student, Sociology, Brock University

Principal/Faculty Supervisor: Professor John Sorenson, Sociology, Brock University

Dear [name]

I would like to invite you to participate in a study on animal advocacy at Marineland Canada. This study is being undertaken to fulfill the research requirements of the thesis component of my Master's Degree in Critical Sociology at Brock University. This research is being funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and is expected to contribute relevant insight around animals used for entertainment purposes in the area of Critical Animal Studies.

The purpose of this research project is to examine contrasting outlooks by a variety of anti-Marineland advocates on the legitimacy of animal welfare vs. animal rights in helping protect animals at Marineland. Through an exploration of the local Marineland controversy, participants' responses pertaining to their outlooks and experiences will help contextualize and illuminate the animal reform vs. animal liberation theoretical debate within animal advocacy. Should you choose to participate, you will be asked to participate in a one-on-one interview conducted by Liz Smith with questions focusing on your outlooks on animal welfare and animal rights, your experiences in the movement, and the strategies you pursue in your advocacy for animals. The interview will take place at Brock University. The duration of the interview will be approximately 1 hour and will be audio-recorded. If you choose to participate in this study, you will receive a \$20 gift card to Rise Above restaurant, as well as \$5 compensation for parking costs at Brock University.

By allowing participants the opportunity to discuss their ideological outlooks on animal welfare vs. animal rights in this project, it could help them to more comprehensively reflect on the implications of their strategies, and better understand other animal advocates that have differing views than them. Because people have very strong perspectives on the legitimacy of animal welfare vs. rights, advocates regularly face dilemmas about what strategies to pursue, and how 'best' to protect animals' interests. Reaching more informed conclusions on why advocates believe what they do, and the broader implications that result from their strategies will be beneficial for future animal advocacy (especially at the grassroots level).

To ensure the confidentiality of the participant, your name will not appear in the final written report. Pseudonyms will be used in place of your names at all times after interviews take place. To further protect your identity, the interview transcripts will not contain any identifying information and will be stored in a locked cabinet in the home of the researcher.

Please be advised you have the right to refuse to participate in this study and can withdraw from the research at any time by advising the researcher of your decision. In addition, you have the right to refuse any questions during the course of the interview without penalty.

If you have any pertinent questions about your rights as a research participant , please contact the Brock University Research Ethics Officer (905 688 5550) ext. 3035, or at reb@brocku.ca)

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me (see below for contact information).

Thank you,

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This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through Brock University's Research Ethics Board [**File # 13-104**].

Appendix 2: Sample Interview Questions

Animal Rights/Liberation Advocates at Marineland

- How did you first become interested in animal rights? Are there particular activists, organizations, theorists or personal experiences that have shaped your outlooks on the nature of animal exploitation?
- How long have you been involved in animal activism? What animal issues have you focused on/been active in fighting? Is there a particular sector of institutionalized animal abuse that is most pressing to you?
- Is it fair to say that you would identify yourself as an "animal rights activist"? Is there any other way you would characterize yourself in regards to animal rights or other social issues? Do you understand a difference in these labels?
- How long have you been demonstrating at Marineland? What kinds of things do you find problematic about it? How do you think Marineland ranks in comparison to other zoos and aquariums? (e.g. SeaWorld, Ripley's Aquarium, African Lion Safari, Safari Niagara, Toronto Zoo)
- What were your initial reactions upon learning about the *Toronto Star* Investigative Series of abuse brought forward by former animal trainers at Marineland including Phil Demers? Did you feel it was integral in building an effective anti-Marineland opposition?
- What have been your experiences at Marineland demonstrations? Are there particular events that stand out to you as particularly important/relevant/successful?
- Do you think political repression of activists' voices are a point of concern in the anti-Marineland movement? If so, can you elaborate on this? Have you felt personally affected by this? What kinds of actions have been taken by Marineland or other institutions that stand by Marineland that stand out to you in regards to delegitimizing claims made by activists or as weakening the movement? Has being embedded in this struggle for fighting to sustain a political voice made your perspectives on animal captivity evolve?
- What is your stance on activists who advocate welfare reform at Marineland? (e.g. cleaner/bigger tanks/enclosures, better veterinary care, more stimulation for captive animals) What do you think are the implications/outcomes of these outlooks?

- Are you familiar with the "Save Marineland's Animals" petition created by Phil Demers and Zoocheck? In the petition, Demers asks the government to *"pass a new law that will regulate a high standard of care for animals in aquariums and zoos, and will provide an opportunity to close places like Marineland **when they don't comply**"*? What are your thoughts on this?
- Are you interested in building alliances with other anti-Marineland activists who have different end-goals than you? (Do you think competing interests are negotiable or not?) How important do you think it is to gain popular support from others in the general public for this cause even if they don't have the same animal rights perspective as you?
- What would you like to see happen at Marineland in the short-term or long-term? Do you think these are attainable goals? What kinds of strategies/tactics do you think activists should get behind to successfully advocate for animals?
- Do your ideologies on animal rights always inform the actions you take/advocate, or do you make compromises?
- What does animal liberation mean to you? Is attaining animal rights at Marineland an end-goal for you or is it part of a broader struggle?

Animal Welfare Advocates at Marineland

- What started your interest in caring about animal welfare? Are there particular organizations, or personal experiences that have shaped your outlooks on issues affecting the welfare of animals?
- How long have you been interested in animal advocacy? What animal issues have you focused on/been active in fighting? Is there a particular sector of animal abuse that is most pressing to you?
- Would you characterize yourself or publicly identify as an "animal advocate"? Tell me a bit more about yourself: is there any other way you would characterize yourself in regards to animal welfare or otherwise? (e.g. a 'voice for the voiceless', vegetarian?)
- When did you start to develop a concern for animals at Marineland, or see Marineland in a negative light? What kinds of things do you find problematic about it? How do you think Marineland ranks in comparison to other zoos and aquariums? (e.g. SeaWorld, Ripley's Aquarium, African Lion Safari, Safari Niagara, Toronto Zoo)

- What were your initial reactions after learning about the *Toronto Star* Investigative Series of abuse brought forward by former animal trainers at Marineland including head trainer Phil Demers?
- Have you taken part in any of the organized demonstrations against the Park? If so, what have been your experiences there? Are there particular events that stand out to you as particularly important/relevant/successful? What do you think are the best ways to fight for protecting the animals at Marineland?
- How do you think Marineland responds to animal activism or the critiques directed against it? Are political repression of activists' voices are a point of concern in the anti-Marineland movement? Can you elaborate on this? What kinds of actions have been taken by Marineland or other institutions that stand by Marineland that stand out to you to delegitimize claims made by animal rights or animal welfare advocates?
- Are you familiar with the "Save Marineland's Animals" petition created by Phil Demers and Zoocheck? /// In the petition, Demers asks the government to *"pass a new law that will regulate a high standard of care for animals in aquariums and zoos, and will provide an opportunity to close places like Marineland **when they don't comply**"*? What are your thoughts on this petition?
- What is your stance on activists who advocate for complete anti-captivity, animal rights or animal liberation at Marineland? What do you think are the implications/outcomes of these outlooks? What do you think of efforts to dismantle amusement parks like Marineland because they have animals?
- According to some animal rights or liberation advocates, they say welfare reform is morally inconsistent and is only successful in making people more comfortable with exploiting animals. How would you respond?
- Are you interested in building alliances with other anti-Marineland activists who have different end-goals than you? Do you think competing interests are negotiable or not? Do you find you can relate to or understand other activists with more radical perspectives?
- What would you like to see happen at Marineland? (e.g cleaner/bigger tanks/enclosures, better veterinary care, more stimulating environment) Do you think these are attainable goals? What kinds of strategies/tactics do you think activists should get behind to successfully advocate for animals at Marineland?

- What does effective animal welfare look like to you (for Marineland animals and animals in general)? What would Marineland have to comply to in order for you to deem it an acceptable institution where demonstrations directed against it should stop?

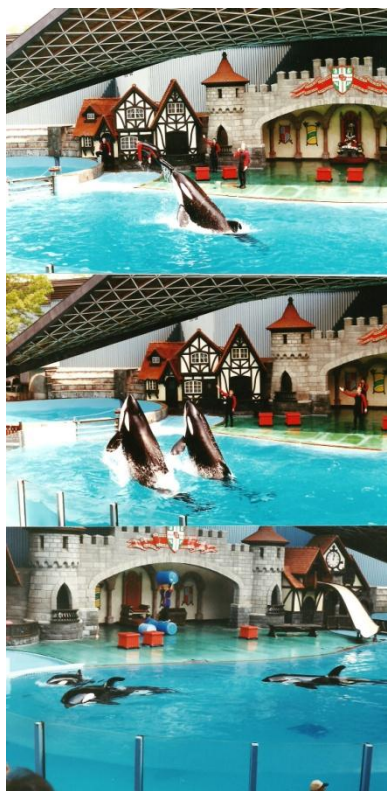
Appendix 3: Photographic Archive

Marineland Canada Visitation

Figure 1: Me and the deer (August, 1997)



Figure 2: Whale show (*Two adults, one baby) (August, 1997)



Marineland Canada Demonstrations

July 2011

Figure 3: Sign put up by John Holer to alert vehicles driving on Marineland Parkway of leafleting demonstrators at the park's vehicle entrance. This sign was placed on a utility pole on municipal property, not Marineland property.



Figure 4: Two Marineland employees directing traffic into the park (left, center), and demonstrator leafleting incoming vehicles (right).



Closing Day Demonstration: October 7th, 2012

Figure 5: Enlarged images from the Toronto Star Investigative Series



Figure 6: Crowd of demonstrators gathering on Marineland parking lot by the entrance gates.



Figure 7: Demonstrators storming the gates, taking their protest inside of the park (later shutting down a dolphin show).



Figure 8: Ocean and animal activist Ric O'Barry speaking to the crowd of demonstrators. (Phil Demers behind, right)



Figure 9: Niagara Regional Police presence at demonstration.



Opening Day Demonstration: May 18th, 2013

Figure 10: Sign referring to the fence Marineland put up around the perimeter of the park.



Figure 11: Sign referring to one of the most popular chants of the M.A.D campaign.



Figure 12: Banner with some of the demonstrators' signatures.



Figure 13: Niagara Regional Police presence in the parking lot behind the new fence.



Figure 14: Inflatable whale accessory hung in chains on the Marineland sign by the entrance gates.



Figure 15: Protestors with signs by fence.



Figure 16: Origami whale display.



International Empty the Tanks Demonstration: July 27th, 2013

Figure 17: Crowd gathering by Marineland Parkway.



Figure 18: Me and other demonstrators with signs and tape on our mouths as a symbolic reference to Marineland's continuous attempt to silence public dissent.

